

**IQBAL'S CONTRIBUTION  
TO  
INDO-PERSIAN LITERATURE**

*By*

**His Excellency Shri S. M. H. Burney**  
*Governor of Haryana*

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## INTRODUCTION

"IQBAL'S CONTRIBUTION TO INDO-PERSIAN LITERATURE" in the following pages is the text of the Dr. M. Ishaque Memorial Lecture of 1984 delivered by His Excellency Shri Sayed Muzaffar Husain Burney, Governor of Haryana at the Iran Society, Calcutta on October 27, 1984. The Lecture was highly appreciated by the distinguished audience and there was much demand for its publication. After this was published in the Iran Society's journal, the *Indo-Iranica*, Volume 37, Nos. 1 to 4 in November 1985 the demand for this issue of the journal came from different quarters. We have, therefore, now brought out the re-print of the article in a book form in deference to the wishes of discriminating readers.

Shri Burney has divided his Lecture under different heads. In the beginning he has given a broad survey of Indo-Persian literature followed by an appreciation of the main works of Iqbal in Persian. Finally he has dealt with the thought-contents and style of Iqbal's works. The Lecture reveals the deep study which Shri Burney has made of the subject and it is sure to be of much interest to the scholars and others interested in the subject.

Shri Sayed Muzaffar Husain Burney, son of late Ejaz Husain was born on August 14, 1923 at Bulandshahr, U. P. He had a brilliant academic career having won the Tempelton Gold Medal in B.A. He did his M.A. in English literature and joined I. A.S. in 1948 on the result of the first competition examination for this Service. He was posted to Orissa state where he served in different capacities including the high posts of Chief Secretary and Development Commissioner in 1979-80. He also held different posts in the Central Government Departments, including that of Secretary in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and the Ministry of Home Affairs, among others. He represented India in several important U. N. Conferences. He also held important positions in public institutions like the Hony. Treasurer and Hony. Secretary of I.A.S. Association, the Chairman of Delhi Wakf Board and Member of the Executive Council of Indian Institute of Public Administration.

Shri Burney was appointed the Governor of Nagaland, Manipur and Tripura in August, 1981 and was transferred in the same capacity to Haryana on June 14, 1984 which post he is still holding.

In the midst of these official responsibilities it is, indeed, pleasant to note that His Excellency has maintained his interest in educational pursuits and scholarly works. He has published several books on 'IQBAL' in which subject he seems to have specialised, and on several other topics. Some of his publications in English and Urdu have been translated in different Indian and foreign languages.

*Dated, February 7, 1987.*

M. A. Majid  
*Managing Editor, Indo-Iranica,  
and General Secretary,  
Iran Society.*



H. E. MR. S. M. H. BURNEY  
Governor of Haryana.

# IQBAL'S CONTRIBUTION TO INDO-PERSIAN LITERATURE\*

By

H. E. SHRI S. M. H. BURNEY,  
*Governor of Haryana, Chandigarh.*

## A Broad Survey of Indo-Persian Literature

SINCE time immemorial close cultural relations have existed between India and Iran. Prof. Browne has observed<sup>1</sup>, "It seems pretty certain that the Indians and Persians were once united in common Indo-Iranian race somewhere in the Punjab." According to Prof. Abdul Ghani, though India and Iran had distinct cultures, yet they had the same relationship as exists between two sisters married in distant and different homes. Besides, Sanskrit and Persian belong to the same family.

According to Dr. Abdul Shakoor Ahsan<sup>2</sup>, the earliest specimens of Persian writing were found in Sind soon after the invasion of Mohammed Bin Qasim in the 7th century A. D. Besides, the Caliph of Baghdad had appointed one Persian, Yakub Bin Lais (867-879) as the Governor of Sind and as a result Persian language was encouraged. Ibne Hoqal (d. 977) had noted that Persian was spoken in Makran, a region included in Sind at that time. According to Al Muqdasi (d. 919), Persian was understood in Multan. However, the beginning of the Persian literature can be traced only during the Ghaznavid period, when Persian language established itself in India and flourished as a court language. Consequent upon the shifting of the capital from Ghazni, Lahore became an important centre of Persian language and learning. Abu Rehan Al-Beruni's major book *Ta'riq Ma' al-Hind* and Zainuddin Gardezi's famous work *Zainul Akhbar* were written in this period. Saints and Sufis had started coming to India since earlier times. The most prominent Sufi of this age is Shaikh Abul Hassan Hajweri popularly known

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\*Text of Dr. M. Ishaque Memorial Lecture delivered at the Iran Society, Calcutta, on October 27, 1984.

1. *A Literary History of Persia*, Volume I, p. 33.

2. *Iqbal Ki Farsi Shairi Ka Tanqidi Jayaiza*.

as Data Ganj Bakhsh whose book *كشاف المعجبين* is not only a major work of seminal importance on mysticism but also the first book in Persian prose in India. Masud Saad Salman and Abul Farj Rani were famous poets of this period.

### *House of Ghori*

During the reign of the Ghori kings there were no distinguished writers or poets except Ruknuddin Hamzah, the poet-laureate at the court of Shihabuddin Ghori and Rashid Shihab<sup>3</sup>. According to Dr. J. N. Sarkar, Reza (or Sangreza) Secretary of Iltamash, was the first eminent India-born Persian poet. The most important event of this period, however, is the arrival of Khwajah Muinuddin Chishti<sup>4</sup> (A.D. 1161) in Ajmer, which became the centre of Sufism, exercising significant influence not only in Rajputana but also in other parts of India.

### *Sultanate Period*

Qutubuddin Aibek, successor of Shihabuddin Ghori, founded the Muslim empire in India. From now onwards Persian became the important vehicle of communication in India and Delhi became the centre of literature and learning. During the reign of the Slave dynasty, the famous poets were Tajuddin Dabir of Delhi, Shihabuddin Mehmara and Syed Sirajuddin Khurasani<sup>5</sup>. During this period the art of historiography was also promoted and the most important historical work *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri* was compiled by Minhajus Siraj. Also the first Tazkera of Persian poets *Lubabul Albaab* (لباب الالباب) was compiled by Nuruddin Mohammed Afi.

The reign of the Khilji and Tughlaq kings ushered in a new era in Persian literature in India. It was during this period that the most famous and prominent Persian poet of India, Amir Khusrau, was born (1263-1325 A.D.). Indeed, Amir Khusrau is the only Persian poet of Indian origin, who is acclaimed even by the most discerning Persian critics. Khusrau is the literary colossus that strode on the literary

3 *India & Iran in the Medieval Period : A Bird's Eye-View.*

4. Chisht is a small village in Khurasan, to which Khwajah Abu Ishaq, teacher of Shaikh Usman Haroni, had migrated from Syria. Here he used to impart instructions to his disciples, who became subsequently known as Chishtis. The Khwajah also, for this reason, was called Chishti.

5. His Diwan has been published by Prof. Nazir Ahmad of Aligarh Muslim University.

scene of this age. He was a multi-dimensional personality—a poet, a prose writer, a soldier, a sufi, a musician. He was a prolific writer and his works include 5 Masnavis modelled on Nizami's 'Khamsa', 5 Diwans of Ghazals and miscellaneous verses and prose works like *Tughlaq Namah*, *Khazainul Futuh*, etc. Daulat Shah Samarqandi estimates the number of verses composed by Khusrau between four and five lakhs. It is said that he was the author of 92 works in all.

The other important poets of this age were Khwaja Amir Hasan Sijzi of Delhi, "Sadi of Hindustan" and Badr-i-Chach.

Another important figure of this age is India's first historian Ziauddin Barni, whose *Tarikh-i-Firuzshahi* is a monumental work. In the reign of Sultan Alauddin Khilji (1296-1314), Fakhr Ghauwas compiled the first Persian lexicon.

#### *Indo-Persian Literature during Mughal period*

It was during the Mughal period that the Persian language and literature reached its peak of glory. Delhi and Agra became important centres of learning and literature and attracted a large number of poets and litterateurs from Iran in quest of wealth and fame in view of continued peaceful conditions and generous patronage by the emperors and their nobles as compared to political turmoil, religious bigotry and persecution in contemporary Iran.

Babar (1526-1530)<sup>6</sup> was himself a noted poet and a writer both in Persian and Turki languages. He wrote his memoirs *Tuzak-i-Babri* in Turki which was translated into Persian by Abdul Rahim Khan-e-Khanan.

Humayun (1530-1556)<sup>7</sup> was also a poet of no mean order with a Diwan to his credit. His chief noble Bairam Khan composed verses both in Turki and Persian and his Diwans have been translated into English by Sir Dennison Ross. Humayun's sister Gulbadan Begum wrote an authoritative history of the period under the title of *Humayun Nama*.

Akbar's reign (1556-1606)<sup>8</sup> is the golden age of Indo-Persian literature. His ministers and nobles were also great and generous patrons

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6. The years within bracket indicate the period of reign of the King.

7. *Ibid.*

8. *Ibid.*

of literature and learning. Abdul Rahim Khan-i-Khanan (d. 1627), a distinguished personality, whose munificent patronage had become proverbial, had equal command over Persian, Turki and Hindi languages. He occupies a unique position amongst classical poets of Hindi as well.

The famous poets of Akbar's period were Ghizali Mashhadi, who was the poet-laureate at the court, Faizi who succeeded him, Urfi (d. 1590/91), the famous Qasida & Ghazal writer and Naziri (d. 1612/13), the distinguished Ghazal writer. Other poets of this age include Hayati Gilani, Sufi Kashmiri, Meer Hyder Memai (میر حیدر عمائی) etc. Abul Fazal has listed 50 eminent Persian poets in Akbar's court. In historiography Abul Fazal's *Akbar Nama* and *Ayeen-e-Akbari* and Abdul Qadir Badayuni's *Muntakhab-ul-Twarikh* are monumental works.

Akbar also set up a Bureau of Translation to render famous works of Sanskrit into Persian. Faizi translated the well-known Sanskrit work on arithmetic and algebra *Lilavati* into Persian as also the folk tale of "Nal Damayanti" into a Persian Mathnavi entitled Nal Daman. A syndicate consisting of Abdul Qadir Badayuni, Mullā Shayeerī (ملا شعیری) and Mohammad Sultan Thanesari translated the great epic *Mahabharat* into Persian prose under the title of *Razm Nama*. Abdul Qadir Badayuni also rendered Valmiki's *Ramayan*<sup>9</sup> into Persian prose. Other major translations of Sanskrit include *Hari Vansh* by Mulla Shayeerī, *Raj Tarangi* by Mohd. Shahabadi etc.

During the reign of Jahangir (1606-1627), Talib-i-Amuli (d. 1657) and Saib Isfahani (d. 1677/78) were two illustrious Persian poets. Jahangir himself made a notable contribution to the art of autobiography by compiling his own memoirs *Tuzak-i-Jahangiri*.

Indo-Persian literature made considerable progress during the reign of Shahjahan (1627-1658). Abu Talib Kalim (d. 1651) was the poet-laureate at his court. Other noted poets of this age include Chander Bhan Brahmin (d. 1563), the first Hindu poet with a Diwan and author of prose works *Chahar Chaman* and *Tuhfatul Wuzara*, Qudsi Mashhadi, Ghani Kashmiri, Sarmad, who was beheaded and whose Rubaiyat were published with a learned preface by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Nasir

9. Prof. Abdul Wadud Azhar's book *Ramayan* dealing with different Persian translations of 'Ramayan' has been published by Bunyad-i-Farhang-e-Iran, Tehran.

Ali Sirhindi, Fani Kashmiri and Munir Lahori. Shahjahan's son Dara Shikoh (1615-1659) was a great scholar of Sanskrit literature and comparative religions and also a noted Persian poet. His works include his Diwan entitled *Ikseer-e-Azam* (السير اعظم), *Sirr-i-Akbar* containing translation of 50 Upanishads, *Safinatul Auliya* (سفينة الالياء) and *Majmaul Bahrain*, a comparative study of the Hindu and Islamic doctrines. Another note-worthy prose work of this period is *Bahar-e-Danish* by Enayatullah Kamboh.

Voluminous correspondence of Aurangzeb (1658-1707)<sup>10</sup> brought out as *Ruqqaat-i-Alamgiri*, *Adaab-i-Alamgiri*, *Ahkam-i-Alamgiri* and *Kalimat-i-Tayyiba* shows his mastery over the Persian language as used in despatch of Government business. Mirza Abdul Qadir Bedil (d. 1720) was the most illustrious poet of the 18th century whose metaphysical verses influenced Ghalib and to some extent, Iqbal. Another eminent poet was Sheikh Ali Hazin (1692-1766/67).

These poets of the 16th and 17th centuries represent what late Prof. Harmann Ethe has happily termed "The Indian Summer of Persian Poetry" and they had, of course, a host of Indian imitators and successors so long as Persian continued to be the polite language of India. Browne, however, dismisses them as "at best skilful manipulators of a foreign idiom."<sup>11</sup>

#### *Persian Literature in Provincial kingdoms*

Persian language and literature were also promoted in the provincial kingdoms. Deccan became "a kind of happy hunting ground of the Persian and Persian-speaking peoples", to quote Prof. H. K. Sherwani, mainly because of the generous patronage provided by the Sultans who were also followers of Shia faith. Under the patronage of Bahamani dynasty followed by five Muslim Sultanates arising on its break-up, significant contribution to Persian language and literature was made for over a period of three centuries. Firoze Shah Bahamani (1397-1421)<sup>12</sup> composed lyrics under the nom-de-guerre of 'Uruji' and 'Firozi'. Muhammad Shah Bahamani (1378-1397)<sup>13</sup> invited the celebrated Hafiz Shirazi (d. 1389) to the Deccan but a furious storm forced him to

10. Period of his reign.

11. *Literary History of Persia* (1500-1924); B. G. Browne—page 168.

12. Period of reign.

13. *Ibid.*

abandon his voyage. His famous ghazal which begins thus is reminiscent of this incident :

دے با غم بسر بردن جہاں یکسر نمی ارزد  
 بہ مے بفروش دلق ما کہہ زین بہتر نمی ارزد

To me, all (the wealth of the) world is not worth a moment's life of quiet

(O Friends) dispose of my patched cloak in exchange for (a cup of) wine for it will not fetch anything better.

His minister Mahmud-e-Gawan (d. 1481) wrote letters to eminent learned men in Iran including Maulana Nuruddin Jami (d. 1492) embodied in his *Riazul Insha*.

The Adilshahi dynasty of Bijapur (1489-1686) adopted Persian as the court language. *Kalamul Muluk*<sup>14</sup> is the collection of poetry of Yousuf Adil Shah (1489-1510). Ibrahim Adil Shah wrote a book on music entitled *Navras* to which the great poet of the Deccan Zuhuri (d. 1615) wrote the preface. Zuhuri's own *Saqi Nama* is famous for its unique literary excellence. His prose work *Seh Nasr* is known for its ornate and florid style. Another renowned poet was Malik-e-Qummi (d. 1616). The famous historian Mohammad Qasim Hindu Shah Firishta compiled his famous history *Gulshan-e-Ibrahimi* (1611). Ibrahim Adil Shah's reign is regarded as the golden age of Persian in the Deccan.

Contemporaneous Qutabshahi dynasty of Golconda (1518-1693) also patronised Persian language. Ibrahim Qutab Shah (1539-1580) founded the city of Hyderabad which came to be known as the second Isfahan. Mohammad Quli Qutab Shah (1580-1611), a colourful personality, was a versatile genius, a romantic poet in several languages and a patron of arts and literature.

During this period a Persian dictionary *Burhān-i Qaate* by Muhammad Hussain Tabrizi (1651), biographies of eminent poets *Hadaiqu's-Salatin* by Ali b. Taifur Bustami (1681), an encyclopaedia *Khirqatul Ulum* by Abu Imad and *Hadiqat-us-Salatin* by Nizamuddin Ahmad were compiled.

Persian literature also flourished under the patronage of the Nizamshahi dynasty at Ahmadnagar. During the reign of Burhan

14. T. N. Devare in *A Short History of Persian Literature*, P. 49.

Nizam Shah (A. H. 989-1003), Syed Ali Tabatabai compiled his renowned historical work *Burhan-e-Maasir*.<sup>15</sup>

In the middle of 16th century A.D., Malwa was compared to Shiraz and Samarqand according to Firishta. Similarly, under the Sharqi kings of Jaunpur, Persian literature was patronised especially by Sultan Ibrahim Sharqi (1402-40).<sup>16</sup> In Bengal the reign of Sultan Ghayasuddin (d. 1410) was the golden age of Persian literature.<sup>17</sup> It was he who established contact with Hafiz whose famous ghazal containing the following verse is said to have been composed at his instance :

شکر شکن شوند همه طوطیان هند

زین قند پارسی کہ بہ بنگالہ می رود

All the parrots of India will crack sugar through this Persian candy which is going to Bengal. (Prof. E. G. Browne)

Other rulers of Bengal who patronised Persian, were Husain Shah and Nusrat Shah.

### Decline

The decline of the Mughal Empire after Aurangzeb undoubtedly affected the growth of Persian language and literature in India. Notwithstanding these unfavourable circumstances, Persian language continued to flourish till the middle of 19th century A.D. With the establishment of the East India Company and subsequent domination of the British, Persian ceased to enjoy the patronage of the rulers and it was replaced as a court language first by Urdu and later by English. Nevertheless, the writers of this period continued to cultivate Persian. Besides, Urdu prose had not established itself till the late 19th century. Even Tazkiras of Urdu poets were written in Persian. The most prominent Persian poet of this period was, no doubt, Ghalib (1797-1869). He was proud of his Persian poetry, although he is remembered today as a great poet of Urdu. His Persian poetry has not received the attention it deserves. He also wrote some beautiful pieces of Persian prose.

15. *India and Iran in the Medieval Period : A Bird's Eye View*, Dr. J. N. Sarkar. (Dr. M. Ishaque Memorial Lecture of 1973).

16. Period of reign.

17. *Sentiments of Love and Adoration for India in Indo-Persian Literature with special reference to Bengal* by Syed Sabahuddin Abdul Rahman of Shibli Academy (Dr. M. Ishaque Memorial Lecture of 1972).

This broad survey of the growth of Indo-Persian literature covering a period of about 1,000 years would show that in the words of Prof. H. K. Sherwani, "there is no branch of Persian literature which is not represented in India. In prose Indo-Persian chronicles, dictionaries, encyclopaedia, belles-letters, religious books of merit and histories and chronicles ranging from universal to local history abound.<sup>18</sup> Prof. Ghani while upholding Indian claim for equal partnership with Persia in the service of Persian literature, has rightly observed: "In short India produced poets and prose-writers at every stage of its history whose writings have been admired and valued in Persia".

This survey would serve as a prelude to the study of the poetry of Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, the greatest Persian poet of the 20th century. He was at once a great poet, a great philosopher and a great scholar.

### IQBAL'S PERSIAN POETRY

#### *Adoption of Persian Language for his poetry*

Before dealing with his Persian poetry, it seems necessary to delve into the reasons which impelled Iqbal, who had achieved phenomenal fame for his Urdu poetry, to switch over to Persian. In fact, one Iranian scholar Mohd. Ali Islami Nidoshan wonders as to why Iqbal with Punjabi as his mother tongue and Urdu, the language of his earlier poetry, should write two-thirds of his poetry in a totally foreign language, namely Persian, particularly when he did not study it as a regular subject in the school or college.<sup>19</sup> There are various theories about his adoption of Persian for his poetic compositions. The earliest explanation is given by Sir Sheikh Abdul Qadir in his foreword to Iqbal's first collection of Urdu verses, *Bang-e-Dara*. Sheikh Abdul Qadir relates that once during Iqbal's stay in England his friends asked him to recite Persian verses and he had to confess that he never attempted to compose Persian verses with the exception of one or two verses. This created an urge in him to write in Persian and immediately on return from this dinner party, Iqbal went on composing verses in Persian almost the whole night and in the morning when he met Sheikh Abdul Qadir, he recited to him two new lyrics in Persian.

Sheikh Abdul Qadir has further observed that Iqbal's deep and wide readings in Persian for preparation of his Ph. D. degree on "The

18. "India and Iran in the Medieval Period: A Bird's Eye View (p. 28) by Dr. Jagdish Narain Sarkar.

19. *Reminiscences of Asad Multani*.

Development of Metaphysics in Iran" must have gone a long way in diverting him to Persian.

In this context it is relevant to note an interesting observation made by a young scholar<sup>20</sup> that Iqbal sought to break out of the mould of Urdu rhetorical poetry with public themes as its frame of reference in which his creative talent was nurtured till 1905, through adopting Persian as the medium of expression. In other words, his option in favour of Persian was not only a reaction against the settled norms but also an epistemic selection without which he could not evolve that style marked by sublimity, richness, serenity, mellow and pervasive melody and architectonic structure which is reflected in all its infinity in his poetry from the beginning of the third phase in *Bang-e-Dara* upto *Armaghan-i-Hijaz*. This anti-rhetorical style is attributable to his choice of Persian medium.

Prof. Hamid Ahmed Khan, in course of his reminiscences of Iqbal, has narrated<sup>21</sup> how, while he was arguing with him as to why he had given up writing poetry in Urdu, Iqbal remarked: "It comes naturally to me in Persian". But this does not give a complete explanation for his change-over from Urdu to Persian. Iqbal himself has given the reason as to why he started writing poetry in Persian. In course of his speech on the occasion of an "At Home" in his honour by the Iqbal Literary Association, London on November 6, 1931, in which almost all the delegates to the Round Table Conference had participated in addition to numerous scholars including Dr. Nicholson, Head of Department of Persian and Arabic languages in Cambridge University and translator of Iqbal's *Asrar-i-Khudi*, Iqbal said<sup>22</sup>, "it seem appropriate that today I should unravel the secret as to why I started composing verses in Persian language. Some people have been expressing the view that I adopted Persian language for the reason that my thoughts might be accessible to wider circles. But my purpose was totally contrary to this. I had written my Masnavi *Asrar-i-Khudi* originally for the Indians only, although there were a few people in India who were well-versed in Persian. In doing so my object was that my ideas should be disseminated amongst a limited circle (of intelligentsia). At that time I did not know that this Masnavi would become popular beyond the confines of

20. *Iqballat*, Vol. II, 1982. Iqbal Institute, Srinagar : article by Dr. Asif Nayeem (pp. 118-119).

21. *Iqbal Ki Shakhshiat Aur Shairi* (1974), p. 45.

22. *Gufar-e-Iqbal* by Mohd. Rafique Afzal (1969), pp. 250-51.

India and would reach even Europe. It is no doubt true that thereafter I was attracted towards Persian and continued writing in this language.<sup>23</sup> Once in course of conversation with Mian Bashir Ahmad, Editor, *Humayun*, Iqbal observed<sup>24</sup> that even his Urdu was Persianised and added significantly, "the poet will write in a language that lends itself to proper expression of his ideas".

In my view Iqbal adopted Persian for his poetical works for the reason that the genre Masnavi in Persian lends itself admirably to exposition of philosophical ideas as is amply illustrated by the Masnavi of Jalaluddin Rumi. In Urdu this form of poetry was mainly used for narrative purposes. Moreover, Iqbal was greatly influenced by Masnavi of Rumi. He, therefore, chose Persian verse-form Masnavi for exposition of his system of thought. In his introduction to his translation of Iqbal's *Asrar-e-Khudi*, Prof. Nicholson<sup>25</sup> also says: "the Persian language is singularly well adapted to express philosophical ideas in a style at once elevated and charming."

An endearing thing about Iqbal is his self-effacing humility in regard to his mastery over the Persian language which was undoubtedly a foreign language for him. In the prelude to *Asrar-e-Khudi* he says:—

|                             |                            |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| ہندیم از پارسی بیگانہ ام    | ماہ نو ہاشم تمہی پیمانہ ام |
| گرچہ ہندی در عذوبت شکر است  | طرز گفتار دری شیرین تر است |
| فکر من از جلوہ اش مسحور گشت | خامہ من شاخ نخل طور گشت    |
| پارسی از رفعت اندیشہ ام     | در خورد با فطرت اندیشہ ام  |

Being an Indian I am not familiar with Persian,  
My goblet is empty resembling a new moon !  
Although Hindustani is sweet,  
Yet sweeter is the style of Dari !  
My thinking was spell-bound by its (Dari's) beauty ;  
My quill is a branch from the tree of Senai,  
Persian fits in well with the nature of my sublime ideas !

23. Malfoozat.

24. Malfoozat compiled by Mahmud Nizami, p. 27.

25. *The Secrets of the Self* : Prof. Nicholson.

### Main Works of Iqbal in Persian

#### 1. *Asrar-i-Khudi* (1915)

With the publication of *Asrar-i-Khudi*, Iqbal became famous as a poet as well as a thinker. The famous orientalist Dr. Nicholson translated it into English in 1920 and thus introduced Iqbal to the West. In this Masnavi Iqbal propounded his theory of self (خودی).

#### 2. *Ramuz-e-Bekhudi* (1918)

Iqbal invested the term 'Khudi' with a new meaning so far unknown in Persian language. It was feared that emphasis on the self of an individual would tend towards disintegration of the social order. In his *Ramuz-i-Bekhudi* he sought to remove this misunderstanding by stressing the imperative need for close integration between the individual and the society. Here again, Iqbal gave a new meaning to the word 'Bekhudi'. In the words of the Iranian critic Mohammed Ali Nidoshan 'Bekhudi' used by Iqbal means "getting out of one's shell and mixing with the people and not losing control of oneself..."

”بے خودی در اصطلاح اقبال از خود بیرون شدن و با خلق پیوستن .....  
نه از خود بے خود شدن“

In this Masnavi Iqbal shows how for the progress of a society it is essential that both the individual and the society should strive for self-development, self-determination and self-assertion.

#### 3. *Payam-i-Mashriq* (1923)

This was written as his answer to Goethe's *West Oestliche Divan* (1832) inspired by his readings from Hafiz. Iqbal has observed that both he and Goethe knew the secrets latent in the heart of the universe and preached the message of dynamic life in this state of flux ;

هر دو دانائے ضمیر کائنات      هر دو پیغام حیات اندر مہمات

*Payam-i-Mashriq* is divided into four parts. Part I contains 'Rubaiyaat' under the heading 'Lala-e-Tur', containing 163 quatrains, or to be precise, 'Do Baities' modelled on those of the mystic poet of 11th century Baba Tahir Uryan in the same metre. According to the Iranian

scholar Mohd. Ali Islami Nidoshan<sup>26</sup> these remind one of the Japanese Haikus. For instance :

تلاش او کنی جز خود نہ بینی تلاش خود کنی جز او نیابی

You search for Him and find none other save you ;  
You search for yourself and find none other save He !

The second part of the work 'Afkar' contains 51 poems on diverse favourite topics of the poet.

The 'Ghazals' grouped under 'Mai Baqi'<sup>27</sup> are composed in the style of Hafiz.

Part IV entitled 'Naqsh-i-Faranq' contains his denunciation of the West, its imperialism and economic exploitation. He, however, warns the west that the period of subjugation of the weak nations by the strong nations was over and capitalism had exhausted itself and the world was now on the threshold of a new era :

انقلابی کہ نہ گنجد بہ ضمیر افلاک

بینم و هیچ ندانم کہ چساں می بینم

The revolution that is not contained within the heart of Heavens ;  
I see and I do not know at all how do I see !

In one of his poems 'Maikhana-i-Farang' the poet has exposed the external glamour and the internal hollowness of the western civilization. This reminds us of the famous poem "Hollow men" of T. S. Eliot :

We are the hollow men  
We are the stuffed men  
Leaning together  
Head piece filled with straw. Alas !

Towards the end of the book a few more verses under a chapter "Khurde" خوردہ have been added expressing his ideas in infinite ways.

Some of the poems from *Payam-i-Mashriq* were translated by Dr. Nicholson and published in the journal *Islamica* of Germany.

26. Deedan Digar Amoz, Shaneedan Digar Amoz.

27. بدہ ساقی سے باقی کہ در جنت نغزاهی یافت کفار آب رکذاباد و کلسکت مصلے را

4. *Zabur-i-Ajam* (1927)

This is a collection of 'Ghazals' but it also contains two Masnavies—'Gulshan-i-Raz-i-Jadid' and 'Bandagi Nama'. Iqbal attached great importance to this work as would be evident from his Urdu verse :

اگر ہو ذوق تو فرصت میں پڑھ زبور عجم

فغانِ نیم شبی بے نوائے راز نہیں !

If you have a taste (for poetry), do read *Zabur-i-Ajam*

Wail at night is not without significance !

It has two parts : part I contains 66 Ghazals composed in the classical style of Rumi, Saadi and Hafiz ; while part II consists of Ghazals and other verse-forms such as Musammat, Tarji Band etc., all these totalling to 75.

The Ghazals are followed by Masnavi 'Gulshan-i-Raz-i-Jadid'. This is a rejoinder to Masnavi *Gulshan-i-Raz* composed by Sheikh Saaduddin Mahmud Shabisteri<sup>28</sup> (d. 1320). One Amir-ul-Hussaini, a disciple of Khwaja Bahauddin Zakaria of Multan, once sent to him 15 questions on various aspects of mysticism in the form of verses. The Sheikh composed 1,000 verses replying to all these questions in the form of a Masnavi that was completed in 1311 A.D. This is considered to be one of the most comprehensive and authoritative interpretation of the cardinal doctrines of mysticism.

Iqbal attempted replies to 11 questions of Amir-ul-Hussaini while combining two questions into one and adopted the same metre as that of the original Masnavi.

The basic theme of the Masnavi is his exposition of his concept of 'self' and its immense potentialities.

The other Masnavi 'Bandagi Nama' is his impassioned appeal to the people of the East to achieve liberation from the debasing, debilitating and dehumanising enslavement by the western nations.

5. *Javed-Nama* (1932)

This is considered to be his magnum opus. Through his imaginary travels to heavenly spheres in the company of his spiritual guide

28. Shabister is a small town near Tabriz.

Jalaluddin Rumi, the poet, styling himself as "Zinda Rood" (living stream), has met great men such as Jamaluddin Asadabadi, Saeed Halim Pasha, Tippu Sultan, Hallaj, Ghalib, Ghani Kashmiri, classical Sanskrit poet Bhartrihari and some others and raised with them all his favourite metaphysical concepts and practical issues of life including social and political problems of the age particularly of those of the Islamic countries in a dramatic manner. Similar works<sup>29</sup> containing exposition of metaphysical and spiritual matters through visit to heavenly spheres include *Art Viraaf Nama* authored by Artai Viraaf ارتائی ویراف or Artag Viraazh (ارتاگ ویراز), a famous priest and religious leader during the reign of Sassanid Emperor Shapur I (241-271), *Risalatul Ghufuran* of Abu Alaa Maari (1057 A.D.), and *Al Fatuhatul Makkia* by Sheikh Mohiuddin Ibnul Arabi (d. 1240). In the western literature the most famous work in this genre is Dante's (d. 1321) *Divine Comedy*. It is noteworthy that the poet's imaginary journey to the heavenly spheres begins with a meeting with a sage of India who presages a bright future for the East. The poet also meets the spirits of Jaffar of Bengal and Sadiq of Deccan who are undergoing ceaseless tortures for their betrayal of their country:—

جعفر از بنگال و صادق از دکن      سنگ آدم، سنگ دین، سنگ وطن

Jaafar from Bengal and Sadiq from Deccan

(Are) disgrace to humankind, disgrace to their religion, disgrace to their country!

The poet also finds the spirit of India in shackles restless for her emancipation. While conveying the message of Tippu, the poet also addresses some beautiful verses to the river Cauvery. Here it may be noted that neither in Urdu poetry nor in the Indo-Persian poetry this river has ever figured.

The Masnavi ends with advice to the younger generation emphasising the need of honest living, strife and struggle and adherence to truth.

#### 6. *Pas Che Bayad Kard Ay Aqwaam-i-Sharq wa Musafir* (1936)

The Masnavi was occasioned by his visit along with Syed Suleman Nadvi and Sir Ross Masud to Afghanistan at the invitation of King Nadir Shah from October 21 to November 2, 1933. The first part of the Masnavi "Musafir" describes Iqbal's visit to Kabul, Ghazni and Qandhar and to the shrine of the Sufi poet Sanai and the mausoleums of Babar and Mahmud Ghaznavi.

29. Abdul Shakoor Ahsan.

The second part of the Masnavi "Pas Che Bayad....." covers the same topics to which Iqbal devoted himself throughout his life, such as, freedom versus slavery, economic exploitation and political and intellectual subjugation of the East, detachment (فقر) and fundamentals of Islam. In his poem اشکے چند بر افتراق ہندیان Iqbal vividly describes the anguish of his soul over the continued communal discord in India.

Both the Masnavis mostly deal with political matters and are slender in volume compared to his earlier Masnavis.

#### 7. *Armaghan-i-Hedjaz* (1938)

This last collection of Iqbal's verses was posthumously published. It contains both Urdu and Persian verses but three-fourths of the verses are in Persian. In the last days he was preparing to go for the Haj pilgrimage and, accordingly, his fancy was wholly taken by this pilgrimage to the holy and hallowed land that he had yearned all his life to visit but, most unfortunately, could not do so. Hence the title of the book. The book contains the verses composed in his last days in which there is an undercurrent of melancholy. Most of the verses are in the form of quatrains or 'Do Baities' as in the earlier work *Zabur-i-Ajam*.

There is an indescribable sadness in the following quatrain on his disenchantment with his contemporaries who did not appreciate his message :

چو رخت خویش بر بستم ازین خاک  
 همه گفتند با ما آشنا بود !  
 و لیکن کس ندانست این مسافر  
 چه گفت و با کہ گفت و از کجا بود !

Even as I depart from this world,  
 Everyone will say 'I knew him',  
 But the truth is, alas ! that none knew  
 Who the stranger was, or what he said, or whence he came !

## CRITIQUE OF IQBAL'S POETRY PART—I : THOUGHT-CONTENT

The quintessence of Iqbal's poetry is its thought-content and this is his main contribution to the Indo-Persian literature. In one of his Urdu couplets he had observed that a brave new world is born out of new ideas and not out of material advances :

جہاں تازہ کی افکار تازہ سے ہے نمود  
کہ سنگ و خشت سے ہوتے نہیں جہاں پیدا

Iqbal has quoted this significant remark of a modern historian :  
"The verdict of history is that worn-out ideas have never risen to power among a people who have worn them out."

And Iqbal's poetry is vibrant with super-abundance of new ideas. His is the great<sup>30</sup> poetry of ideas. I high-light below some of the major subjects in his poetry.

### *Concept of Ego*

His concept of self or ego is the corner-stone of his system of thought. In his *Asrar-i-Khudi* he has explained that his philosophy of the self rests on two points :—(a) that personality is the central fact of universe, and (b) that personality 'I am' is the central fact in the constitution of man. He develops these ideas and says, "The human ego<sup>31</sup> can be made permanent by adopting a certain mode of life and thereby bringing it into contact with the ultimate source of life." He also explained how the word 'khudi' (خودی) was chosen with great difficulty and most reluctantly. He says, "Ethically the word 'khudi' means, as used by me, self-reliance, self-respect, self-confidence, self-preservation, even self-assertion when such a thing is necessary in the interests of life and the power to stick to the cause of truth, justice, duty, etc. even in the face of death."

In *Asrar-i-Khudi* he explains how 'khudi' is the very basis of evolutionary process ;—

چوں حیات عالم از زور خودی است      پس بقدر استواری زندگی است  
قطره چوں حرف خودی از بر کند      هستی بے سایہ را گوهر کند

30. Note on Nietzsche.

31. *Thoughts & Reflections of Iqbal* by S. A. Vahid.

سبزه چون تاب دمید از خویش یافت      همت او سینه گشن شکافت  
 چون زمین بر هستی خود محکم است      ماه پابند طواف پیهم است  
 هستی مهر از زمین محکم تر است      پس زمین مسجور چشم خاور است  
 چون خودی آرد بهم نیروئی زیست      می کشاید قلزمی از جوئی زیست

Since the life of the universe comes from the strength of the self  
 Life is in proportion to this strength ;  
 When a drop of water gets the self's lesson by heart  
 It makes its worthless existence a pearl !  
 As the grass discovered the power of growth in its self,  
 Its aspiration clove the breast of the garden !  
 Because the Earth has a being that is firm  
 The captive moon goes round it perpetually !  
 The being of the Sun is stronger than that of the Earth,  
 Therefore is the Earth bewitched by the Sun's eye !  
 When Life gathers strength from the self,  
 The river of life expands into an ocean.<sup>32</sup>

Iqbal emphasises that one should first understand oneself before one tries to understand God :

غلام همت آن خود پرستم      که با نوری خودی بیند خدا را

I am beholden to the courage of one who recognizes  
 one's own worth  
 For he sees God through the light of his Ego.

'One should know one's own self in order to know God' quotes Hadith. As a Persian critic of Iqbal has put it :

”خود شناسی خدا شناسی است“

In another verse he accepts a position where one can deny the existence of God but should not deny one's own existence :

شاخ نهال سدره ای خار و خس چمن مشو  
 منکر او اگر شدی منکر خویشتن مشو

You are the branch of the tree of Sadra (in heaven), don't be like  
 thorns and grass of the (earthly) garden,  
 If you deny His existence, do not deny your own existence !

To Iqbal life is essentially an urge for creativity which fulfils the requirements of the ego or the uniqueness of each individual. In *Javid Nama* God himself says :

زنده ای مشتاق شو، خلاق شو همچو ما گیرنده آفاق شو

You are alive, be keen, be creative ;  
 Like Me take over the universe !

He presents a dynamic view of life. In his Lectures<sup>33</sup> he says :—

“To my mind, there is nothing more alien to the Quranic world than the idea that the Universe is a temporal working-out of a preconceived plan an already completed product which left the hand of its Maker ages ago and is now lying stretched in space as a dead mass of matter to which time does nothing and consequently is nothing.” It is really a growing Universe, capable of infinite increase and extension ; for “deep in its being lies perhaps the dream of a new birth.”

Man is a partner of God in the ever-continuing process of creation. Here one is reminded of Shelley's verses :

Worlds<sup>34</sup> on worlds are rolling ever  
 From creation to decay,  
 Like the bubbles on a river  
 Sparkling, bursting, borne away !

He even taunts God as to why He does not bring a new Adam into existence :—

نقش دیگر طراز ده آدم پخته تر بیار  
 لعبت خاک ساختن می نه سزد خدائے را

Fashion a new pattern,  
 Bring a more perfect Adam into existence !

33. Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam.

34. *Complete Poetical Works of P.B. Shelley*. by Hutchinson. p. 457.

This making of playthings of clay  
Is not worthy of God, the Creator !

(*Payam-i.Mashriq*)

Another factor for development of the ego is search for new purposes in life so that all the efforts of an individual are directed towards their attainment :—

|                            |                           |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| زندگانی را بقا از مدعاست   | کار دانش را درا از مدعاست |
| زندگی در جستجو پوشیده است  | اصل او در آرزو پوشیده است |
| آرزو را در دل خود زنده دار | تا نگردد مشت خاک تو مزار  |
| آرزو صید مقاصد را کمند     | دفتر افعال را شیرازه بند  |
| طاقت پرواز بخشد خاک را     | خضر باشد موسی ادراک را    |
| زندگی سرمایه دار از آرزوست | عقل از زائیدگان بطن اوست  |

Life is preserved by purpose ;  
Because of the goal its caravan tinkles !  
Life is latent in seeking :  
Its origin is hidden in Desire !  
Keep desire alive in thy heart,  
Lest thy handful of dust become a tomb.  
Desire is a noose for hunting ideals,  
A binder for the book of deeds !  
It gives to earth the power of soaring.  
It is a Khizr to the Moses of perception !  
'Tis Desire that enriches life,  
And the intellect is a child of its womb.

(*Asrav-i-Khudi*)

In fact, according to Iqbal, the most pathetic state of the man is ennui, namely, desire for desire. Fulfilment of desire is not so important as one's constant yearning towards it.

Just as an individual cannot attain the highest goal in life without self-affirmation, similarly a nation or a society cannot realise its immense potentialities without the self-development of the individuals

constituting the nation or the social group as explained in his *Ramuz-e-Bekhudi*. A nation according to Iqbal can progress only if it has set for itself a goal to achieve :

مرگ فرد از خشکی رود حیات      مرگ قوم از ترک مقصود حیات

The individual dies if the river of life goes dry,  
The nation dies if it loses hold of the purpose of life.

(*Ramuz-i-Bekhudi*)

### *Dynamic view of Life*

Implicit in his concept of the ego is his vision of life based on action. He is a great admirer of Lord Krishna who preached the gospel of action, (KARM) in the sacred Gita and has thus observed in the introduction to *Asrar-i-Khudi*: "Shri Krishna's name will always be taken with great respect and appreciation as this great man criticised in a charming way, the philosophical traditions of his country and nation and showed convincingly that renunciation of action does not mean its total renunciation, because action is what is required by nature and it reinforces life; what is meant by renunciation of action is, in fact, dissociating it from its result."

To Iqbal life is a continuous process of change, a journey without destination, a ceaseless reaching after perfection; it unfolds its immeasurable possibilities to a man of action :—

دما دم نقشن هائے تازه ریزد      به یک صورت قرار زندگی نیست

Life continues to make continually ever-changing images,  
Life is not content with one form.

Again :—

چه کنم که فطرت من به مقام در نسازد

دل ناصبور دارم چو صبا به لاله زارے

چو نظر قرار گیرد به نگار خوبروئے

تپد آن زمان دل من پئے خوبتر نگارے

ز شرر ستاره جویم ز ستاره آفتابے

سر منزلی ندارم کہ بمیرم از قرارے

طلبم نہایت آن کہ نہایتے ندارد  
 بہ نگاہ نا شکیبے بہ دل آمیدوارے

What can I do, my nature is averse to rest ;  
 My heart is impatient like the breeze in the poppy field ;  
 When the eye beholds an object of beauty,  
 The heart yearns for something more beautiful still ;  
 From the spark to the star, from the star to the sun  
 Is my quest ;  
 I have no desire for a goal,  
 For me, rest spells death !  
 With an impatient eye and a hopeful heart  
 I seek for the end of that which is endless !

(*Payam-i-Mashriq*)

It is in this context that he has exhorted his countrymen, his co-religionists and the people of the East to take to a life of action, strife and struggle and even conflict :—

میارا بزم بر ساحل کہ آن جا نوائے زندگانی نرم خیز است  
 بدریا غلط و با موجشن در آویز حیات جاوداں اندر ستیز است

Feast not on the shore, for there  
 Softly breathes the tune of life.  
 Grapple with the waves and dare !  
 Immortality is strife.

(*Payam-i-Mashriq*)

He goes further to say :—

زمانہ گر با تو نسازد تو با زمانہ ستیز

If the world does not go along with you, you fight against it.

This is opposed to the age-old wisdom contained in the oft-quoted adage :—

زمانہ گر با تو نہ سازد تو با زمانہ ساز

If the world does not go along with you, you go along with it !

Weakness, helplessness and passivity are contrary to his view of life. His message is one of living dangerously. One poem in *Payam-i-*

*Mashriq* is significantly entitled "اگر خواهی حیات اندر خطرزی" (If you desire life, live among dangers).

Again :—

سر این فرمان حق دانی که چیست  
زیستن اندر خطرها زندگیت

Do you know the inner meaning of God's Command :  
The secret of a joyous life is to live dangerously.

Again :—

گرفتم این که شراب خودی بے تلخ است  
بدرد خویش نگر، زهر ما بدرمان کش

The wine of egohood is not doubt bitter, but do look to thy disease and take my poison for the sake of the health.

(Translated by Iqbal himself)

(*Zabur-i-Ajam*)

Ego attains perfection through hurdles and difficulties :—

از بلاها پخته تر گردد خودی  
تا خدا را پرده وا گردد خودی

Ego becomes strong through vicissitudes,  
Till it pulls away the veil and reveals God.

His cult is the cult of Husain :—

ریگ عراق منتظر، کشت حجاز تشنه کام  
خون حسین باز ده کوفه و شام خویش را  
Sands of Iraq, fields of Hejaz are thirsty  
Spill again the blood of Hussai in your own Kufa and Syria !

Iqbal is a poet of radiant hope. That is why he is an admirer of Nietzsche and condemns Schopenhauer (d. 1860). In a dialogue between these two philosophers Nietzsche says :—

درمان ز درد ساز اگر خسته تن شوی  
خوگر به خار شو که سراپا چمن شوی

Discover remedy in pain itself, if you are sick and tired,  
Get used to thorns so that you become the embodiment of garden !

It was his unswerving belief in action as the mainspring of life that he condemned in no uncertain terms the prevalent practices of mysticism and strongly criticised the mystical poet Hafiz in his *Masnavi Asrar-i-Khudi*. This created a great reaction against him amongst the educated Muslims and, as a result, Iqbal had to delete the verses criticising Hafiz from the second edition of the *Masnavi*. For the same reason, he also criticised the neo-Platonism which was propagated by one of Plato's disciples, Plotinus, and became, in course of time, the basis of the Iranian doctrine of Sufism.<sup>36</sup> What Iqbal, in fact, condemned amongst the beliefs of the Sufis was their propagation of enervating cult of self-denial, self-abnegation and denunciation of the world. In this connection, he observed: "When I condemn self-negation, I do not mean self-denial in the moral sense; for self-denial in the moral sense is a source of strength to ego. In condemning self-negation I am condemning those forms of conduct which lead to the extinction of the 'I' as a metaphysical force, for its extinction would mean its dissolution, its incapacity for personal immortality. The ideal of Islamic mysticism, according to my understanding, is not the extinction of 'I'. The 'Fana' (فنا) in the Islamic mysticism means not extinction but surrender of the human ego to the Divine Ego. The ideal of Islamic mysticism is a stage beyond the stage of *Fana*, namely, *Baqa* (بقا) which, from my point of view, is the highest stage of self-affirmation..."

It was an article of faith with Iqbal that human ego does not merge in the Divine Ego: on the contrary, it assimilates the attributes of the Divine Ego.

For Iqbal true mysticism lies in detachment (نقر) which implies a state of voluntary abandon of all material things instead of abject helplessness. A true Faqir or Qalandar does not even wish to carry the load of his own cloak:—

خرقه بار است بر دوش فقیر      چون صبا جز بوئے گل سامان نگیر

The cloak itself is a burden on the shoulder of Faqir;  
Like zephyr that carries only the fragrance of a flower,  
do not carry anything else!

Iqbal's philosophy of life is predicated upon the twin doctrines of self (خودی) and love (عشق) and detachment (نقر) fuses them together.

36. Iqbal, in fact, denounced Plato as the author of this doctrine.

*Concept of Love*

Love has been a conventional theme in Persian poetry, particularly in the mystical poetry. It was Jalaluddin Rumi who expanded the scope of love to an extent unequalled in the mystical poetry of Iran and he was a major influence on Iqbal. Like the self, love or 'Ishq' is another central concept in Iqbal's philosophy. His concept of love is, however, entirely different from the conventional concept of love that is the traditional subject of the Indo-Persian poetry. For him the term عشق (love) implies a creative urge, a desire to excel and a ceaseless effort to achieve perfection. "Love gives a meaning and new force to life. Its highest form is the creation of values and ideals and the endeavours to realise them."<sup>37</sup> Iqbal defines love as under :—

عشق آئین حیات عالم است امتزاج سالمات عالم است

Love is the code of life,  
It is the synthesis of all values and ideals.

Love is the mainspring of creation, evolution and progress. *Amour vincit omnia* (love conquers every thing). In his view the self attains its perfection through love :—

نقطه نوری که نام او خودی است زیر خاک ما شرار زندگی است  
از محبت میشود پاینده تر زنده تر، سوزنده تر، تابنده تر

The luminous point whose name is the Self,  
Is the life-spark beneath our dust !  
By love, it is made more lasting,  
More living, more burning, more glowing !

(*Asrar-i-Khudi*)

In the poetry of Iqbal there is a fervour, a wakeful anguish of the soul which he calls سوز (inner fire) :

دوام ما ز سوز ناتمام است چو ساهی جز تپش بر ما حرام است  
مجو ساحل که در آغوش ساحل تپید یکدم و مرگِ دوام است

Our existence is derived from continuing anguish  
Peace is a taboo for us just as for fish ;  
Do not seek the bank for in its embrace,  
Rest-lessness ceases for a moment and then  
ensues unending death !

37. Dr. Ishrat Hasan.

Sorrow invests life with a new energy. Iqbal has well described anguish in love in the following couplet :—

یک غم است آن غم که آدم را خورد  
آن غم دیگر که هر غم را خورد

There is a kind of sorrow that eats the vitals of man,  
There is another kind of sorrow that eats away all other sorrows !

Conflict between love and reason, intellect and intuition is a favourite subject of the Sufis and it occupies a central place in Iqbal's doctrine of 'Ishque', too. To take an example, in his poem "معارف" "علم و عشق" in *Payam-e-Mashriq* he elucidates that both love and knowledge are the two basic values of life. Again, he says in *Javed Nama* :—

علم تا از عشق برخوردار نیست جز تماشه خانه افکار نیست

Till Intellect is blest by Love,  
It is naught but a kaleidoscope of ideas !

Jalaluddin Rumi has emphasised the negative aspect of reason and observed that if knowledge is used for material progress, it becomes a curse ; but if it is acquired to develop one's inner capacities, it becomes a blessing :

علم را بر تن زنی ماری بود علم را بر دل زنی یاری بود

Deeply influenced by Jalaluddin Rumi, Iqbal also treats this perennial conflict between intellect and intuition in the same manner :

علم ترسان از جلال کائنات عشق غرق اندر جمال کائنات

Knowledge trembles before the fury of the universe ;  
Love is immersed in the glory of the universe !

پگذر از عقل و در آویز بموج یم عشق  
که در آن جوئے تذک مایه گهر پیدا نیست

Pass beyond Intellect and grapple with the wave in Love's ocean,  
For, in Intellect's shallow rivulet there are no pearls !

(*Payam-i-Mashriq*)

To him the greatest tragedy of the modern civilization is its abject surrender to and total faith in rationalism as against intuition. He

denounced growing materialism of the west and its alienation from spiritualism :

دانش حاضر حجاب اکبر است      بت پرست و بت فروش و بت گراست  
پا بزندان مظاهر بسته      از حدود حس برون ناسته

Modern knowledge is the greatest blind  
Idol-making, Idol-selling, Idol-worshipping ;  
Schackled in the prison-house of phenomena,  
It has not overleaped the limits of the sensible !

(*Asrar-i-Khudi*)

Here it is also important to note that in Iqbal's poetry the traditional subject of love in the lyrical poetry of Indo-Persian poets has been sublimated and elevated to a higher plane.

#### *Supremacy of Man*

Iqbal has dwelt upon supremacy of man in his poetry. This is unparalleled in the entire Persian literature with the sole exception of Jalaluddin Rumi's poetry. Iqbal's works are replete with verses and poems extolling the indomitable spirit of man, urge for the conquest of the universe and his capacity and aspiration to become the viceregent of God on earth. In his scheme of things man is supreme and is the centre of the universe. He sings of the glowing triumph of man over matter. In a moving poem *Milad-i-Adam* (میلاد آدم) he waxes eloquent on the birth of Adam :—

نعرہ زد عشق کہ خونین جگرے پیدا شد  
حسن لرزید کہ صاحب نظرے پیدا شد  
فطرت آشفست کہ از خاک جہان مجبور  
خود گرے، خود شکنے، خود نگرے پیدا شد  
خبرے رفت ز گردوں بہ شبستان ازل  
حذر اے پردگیان پردہ درے پیدا شد  
آرزو بیخبر از خویش باغوش حیات  
چشم وا کرد و جہان دگرے پیدا شد

Love proclaimed the birth of a being with a bleeding heart !  
Beauty trembled at the advent of a being gifted with vision !

Nature worried that, out of passive clay,  
 Was born at last a being,  
 Self-creating, self-destroying, self-regarding !  
 Word went round from the heavens to the night of Eternity,  
 Beware ye who are veiled, the render of veils is born at last !  
 Desire, unconscious of self, wrapt in slumber,  
 Opened its eyes in the lap of life,  
 And lo ! a new world came into being !

(*Payam-i-Mashriq*)

In a matchless poem he has brought into sharp focus the creativity, the aesthetic sense and the organising capacity of man to make life worth living :—

تو شب آفریدی چراغ آفریدم      سفال آفریدی ایساغ آفریدم  
 بیابان و کہسار و راغ آفریدی      خیابان و گلزار و باغ آفریدم  
 من آنم کہ از سنگ آئینہ سازم      من آنم کہ از زہر نوشینہ سازم

Thou created the night, I the lamp ;  
 Thou created the clay, I the vase !  
 Thou created the jungle, mountains and deserts,  
 I created gardens, orchards and flower-pots !  
 It is I who make glass out of stone,  
 It is I who extract elixir out of poison<sup>38</sup>.

He goes to the extent of saying that man is capable of capturing angels and even God, taking a cue from his intellectual mentor Rumi who said :

بزرگ کنگرہ کبریاش مردانند      فرشتہ صید، پیمبر شکار و یزدان گیر

Iqbal says :

در دشت جنون من جبریل زبون صیدے  
 یزدان بکمند اور اے ہمت مردانہ

Some of his poems mirror his ardent desire to reconstruct the entire scheme of things which was so aptly expressed in the following rendering of one of the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam by Edward Fitzgerald

38. Translation by K. G. Saiyidain.

(The original rubai of Khayyam, I must confess, is not so powerful and beautiful) :

Ah Love ! Could thou and I with Fate conspire  
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire ;  
Would not we shatter it to bits—and then,  
Remould it nearer to the Hearts' Desire !

In his Lectures Iqbal has observed :

“Endowed with the power to imagine a better world and to mould what is into what might be, the ego in him aspires, in the interest of an increasingly unique and comprehensive individuality to exploit all the various environments on which he may be called upon to operate.”

No other poet dwelt upon the greatness and importance of man earlier in the Indo-Persian poetry.

*Freedom and Pre-destination* (جبر و قدر)

Another important subject of Iqbal's poetry is the concept of freedom and pre-destination (جبر و قدر). This again was a common subject in Persian poetry. As a matter of fact, for centuries the people of the East believed in the philosophy of total resignation to the fate which was pre-determined. The Hindus considered it as the outcome of their deeds in their previous life ; whereas the Christians and the Muslims looked upon it as the Will of God. This was also the traditional approach to the subject in Persian poetry and for that matter, in the whole of oriental literature. The celebrated poet Hafiz was a believer in pre-destination. So also was Sheikh Mehmood Shabistery, the author of the Masnavi *Gulshan-e-Raaz*, who held the view that one who did not believe in pre-destination, was a Kafir (non-believer). Iqbal studied this concept in the light of the teachings of the Quran and concluded that the Quran held the man to be responsible, to a large extent, for his own actions.

In his poetry he has emphasised that man is completely free to determine his destiny in the manner he likes and to realise all his potentialities through self-development, continuous effort and a clear perception of the goal.

In his lectures he observed :

“Goodness is not a matter of compulsion ; it is the self's free surrender to the moral ideal and arises out of a willing co-operation of free egos. A being whose movements are wholly determined, cannot

produce goodness. Freedom is thus seen to be a condition of goodness." He thus believed in the doctrine of free will. This was against the tradition of major mystical poets who propagated the doctrine of predestination and resignation to fate. According to Iqbal it is this belief that sapped the vitality of the nations of the east and created in them inertia, lethargy and inaction resulting in their subjugation by the western nations. In Iqbal's view not only an individual but also a nation can determine its own destiny :—

خدا آن ملتے را سروری داد کہ تقدیرش بدست خویش بنوشت

God blessed that nation with supermacy  
That wrote its destiny in its own hand !

While the people of the East had implicit faith in fate, the western nations believed in free will. Wisdom lies in adopting the middle path. In one of his matchless quatrains Iqbal has described his meeting with an old Catholic priest in Rome who pointed out this truth with a telling effect :

به روما گفتم با من راهب پیر کہ دارم نکته از من فراگیر  
کند هر قوم پیدا مرگ خود را ترا تقدیر و ما را کشت تدبیر

In Rome an old priest told me :  
I have a point that you may learn from me ;  
Every nation causes its own destruction  
Just as fate killed you ;  
Free will killed us.

#### *Denunciation of West*

Another notable feature of Iqbal's poetry is his scathing condemnation of the western civilization and western modes of thinking. He was an ardent crusader for the emancipation of the east which was conquered and enslaved by the western countries through their political machinations and economic exploitation. He believed that the nations of the east could throw away the yoke of slavery only if they followed the path of self-respect, self-determination and self-realisation. He condemned in the most unambiguous terms the growing tendency amongst the new generation of sedulously aping the ways of the Europeans. A man truly becomes a slave when he adopts his master's mode of thinking. Although he himself studied western philosophy in England and Germany, yet he advocated that the people of the East should not forsake their old culture, traditions and history. At the same time they

must equip themselves with the latest advances in all fields of knowledge made in the west. He was thus an advocate for acquiring Western Knowledge and studying sciences and yet preserving one's old values and culture and traditions. He has brought this out beautifully in these lines in *Javed Nama* :—

شرق را از پی برد تقلید غرب      باید این اقوام را تنقید غرب  
قوت مغرب نه از چنگ و رباب      نه ز رقص دختران بسے حجاب  
محکمی او را نه از لادینی است      نهے فروغش از خط لاطینی است  
قوت افرنگ از علم و فن است      از ہمیں آتش چراغش روشن است

The East in imitating the West is deprived of its true self,  
It should attempt, instead, a critical appraisal !  
The power of the West springs not from her music  
Nor from the dance of her unveiled daughters !  
Her strength comes not from irreligion,  
Nor her progress from the adoption of the Latin script ;  
The power of the West lies in her Arts and Sciences,  
At their fire has it kindled its lamps.

#### *Conception of Perfect Man*

Iqbal's original and unique contribution to Persian poetry and, in fact, to the poetry of the East, was his conception of the Perfect Man whom he differently calls 'Mard-e-Haq', 'Qalandar', 'Faqir', 'Mard-e-Momin'. The traits of such a person are, in his view, deep religious faith, resolute courage, dynamism and action, self-respect and detachment. The superman of Iqbal derives all his values from God and determines all his principles, ways of life, concept of good and evil in the light of his invincible faith in God. He is essentially a man of action. He is "action-intoxicated" (مستہی کردار) endowed with originality in thinking and innovation in skill (مستہی اندیشہ).

تراش از تیشہ خود جادہ خویش      براہ دیگران رفتن عذاب است  
گر از دست تو کار نادر آید      گناھے ہم اگر باشد ثواب است

Cut your path with an axe of your own,  
It is a sin to tread the beaten paths of others !  
If you achieve something unique and original,  
Even a sin becomes a virtue !

(*Payam-i-Mashriq*)

He is also motivated by love and peace and amity. Earlier a Muslim thinker Abd-al Karim Jili had provided the metaphysical thesis of the origin and development of his Perfect Man—انسان کامل in his work '*Al-Insanul Kamil*' (1408-1417). So also Sheikh Mohiuddin Ibnal Arabi in his two renowned works *فصوص الحکم* and *التدبيرات الالهيه*. Later Jalaluddin Rumi also presented his conception of a superman :—

زیں ہمرہان سست عناصر دلم گرفت شیر خدا و رستم دستانم آرزوست

I am unhappy with my inactive companions ;  
I look for persons like Ali and Rustam of Dastan !

Iqbal sums up the character of his superman in these verses :—

پیش باطل تیغ و پیش حق سپر امر و نہی او عیار خیر و شر  
عفو و عدل و بذل و احسانش عظیم ہم بقہر اندر مزاج او کریم

He is flashing sword against untruth,  
And a protection shield for truth !  
His affirmation and negation  
Are the criteria for Good and Evil !  
Great is his forgiveness, his justice, his generosity, his grace,  
Even in anger he knows how to be kind !

Some people have contended that Iqbal's conception of the superman is derived from Nietzsche's superman. But this is not correct. Iqbal drew upon the Holy Quran for formulation of his concept, as, according to the Holy Book, man was to become viceregent of God on earth. In his letter to Dr. Nicholson dated 24th January, 1921 he writes, "Nor does he rightly understand my idea of the Perfect Man which he confounds with the German thinker's Superman. I wrote on the Sufi doctrine of the Perfect Man more than twenty years ago, long before I had read or heard anything of Nietzsche." Again in his note on Nietzsche he says, "The conception of this Superman in Nietzsche is purely materialistic. Being a thorough-going materialist, Nietzsche cannot use the term spirit except in the sense of life in its metaphysical manifestations. Further Nietzsche's Superman is a biological product. The Islamic perfect man is the product of moral and spiritual forces."

## PART II—STYLE

*Iqbal's Concept of Art*

For Iqbal there was no anti-thesis between life and art. He believed that great art was devoted to a great purpose which was to invest life with a meaning and to inspire faith, confidence, zest and a spirit of adventure in man. Sometimes one tends to get an impression that he was indifferent to the art of poetry. Indeed he refrained from calling himself a poet. In his letter of 27th December, 1913 to Khwaja Hasan Nizami he says: "You do know that I do not consider myself as a poet nor have I ever studied poetry as an art." In another letter of October 10, 1919 to Syed Suleman Nadvi he observes: "In poetry my objective has never been literature for the sake of literature. Hence, I have no time to devote myself to the niceties of art. My purpose is simply to bring about revolution in thought.... No wonder that the coming generations may not consider me as a poet because art needs utmost devotion and this is not possible for me in the present circumstances." In one of his verses he has aptly conveyed this idea:—

نہ بینی خیر از آن مرد فرو دست      کہ بر من تمہمت شعر و سخن بست

You can never expect any good from that mean fellow  
Who falsely accuses me of being a poet!

Again :

نغمہ کجا و من کجا ساز سخن بہانہ ایست

سوئے قطار می کشم ناقہ بے زمام را

I have nothing to do with songs and melodies ;  
they are only excuses.

The object of my singing is only to bring back to  
the line the camels that have broken their reins,  
have wandered away.<sup>40</sup>

Nevertheless, the fact remains that notwithstanding his indifference to the art of poetry, Iqbal is a consummate artist ; there is a careful,

39. Translation by Dr. Andalib Shadani in his article "Iqbal's Conception of Art" (P. 489) in the book *Studies in Iqbal's Thought & Art* edited by M. Saeed Sheikh.

40. *Ibid.*

cultivated craft behind apparently effortless versification. In one of his letters to Maulana Grami, rarely noticed by the critics, he has observed that many people do not realize how a poet has to crucify himself many a time before he can chisel out a perfect line. While Iqbal considered poetry to be the vehicle for conveyance of his thoughts, yet his mode of expression of these thoughts constitutes what great poetry exemplifies—fusion of style and content, thought and expression, medium and message. The act of creation is the act of synthesis. In one of his letters he says, "The creative or inspirational effect of poetry does not lie in its content only but also in its language, choice of diction and style".

In one of his verses he has said that a poet or a prophet alone can change the destiny of nations. And he was such a poet and a prophet in that sense :

ضمیر امتان را پاک سازد کلیمے یا حکیمے نے نوازے

The very soul of a nation is purified  
By a prophet (Kalim) or a poet-sage !

Again :

شاعر اندر سینہ ملت چو دل ملتے بے شاعرے انبار گل

The poet is like the heart in the breast of a nation,  
A nation without a poet is like a heap of clay.<sup>41</sup>

In his 'Stray Reflections', Iqbal had remarked : "Nations are born in the hearts of poets ; they prosper and die in the hands of politicians". In his view a great poet plays the role of a prophet too :—

شعر را مقصود اگر آدم گری است شاعری ہم وارث پیغمبری است

If poetry aims at producing ideal man ;  
The poet may rightly be said to have inherited the qualities of a  
prophet !<sup>42</sup>

This perhaps prompted Maulana Grami to call Iqbal a prophet :

در دیدہ معنی نگران حضرت اقبال

پیغمبری کرد و پیغمبر نہ تو ان گفت

41. Translation by A. J. Arberry.

42. *Ibid.*

In the eyes of the cognicenti Iqbal virtually  
 Performed the functions of a prophet,  
 Though one cannot call him a prophet.

Late Prof. Alam Khundmiri declared Iqbal as the "first philosopher, not only in Islam but in the whole East to take life and time seriously and make them the basis of his poetry."<sup>43</sup>

### *Iqbal's Style*

Here it may be relevant to state that broadly speaking, there are three styles prevalent in Persian poetry—"Sabak-i-Khurasani", "Sabak-i-Iraqi" and "Sabak-i-Hindi". The former style was evolved in the ninth century A.D. in the region known as Khurasan covering Bukhara, Samarqand, Balkh, Merv, Hirat, etc., and continued to be followed for above three hundred years. The early Indian poets of 11th century A.D. including Masud-i-Sad Salman (1121) and Abul Faraj Runi (d. 1091) of Lahore composed their verses in this style. This style is characterised by pristine simplicity, spontaneity, naturalness, economy of words and intensity of emotions. The similes and metaphors used were also simple and derived mostly from the objects observed by the poets around them.

In or around the 12th century A.D. new experiments were made in poetic composition and efforts were made at embellishment through use of innovative metres, artifices, original and uncommon word-constructions. This style originated from Isfahan and its great practitioners were Khaqani and Nizami. As this city was situated in the region known as Iraq-Ajam, this style was known as "Sabak-i-Iraqi". The style reached its highest watermark in the poetry of Hafiz of Shiraz. The characteristics of this style are richness, subtlety, novelty of topics, use of original conceits and embellishment of verses through innovative word-constructions, contrived similes and uncommon metaphors, etc. This style was popular for about three hundred years when another style of composition was evolved by Fughani Shirazi in the 15th century A.D. This style was mostly nurtured, cultivated and promoted by the Indian poets in the Mughal period. The main characteristics of this style of poetry are excessive use of imagery, novelty in metaphors and similes, display of rhetorical artistry, artificial devices and use of epigrams. The well-known practitioners of this style are Urfi, Naziri,

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43. *Iqbal—Poet - Philosopher of Pakistan*, edited by H. Malik, Columbia University Press (U.S.A.).

Zahuri, Talib Amuli, Abu Talib Kalim and Saaib. This 'Sabak-i-Hindi' was as popular in Iran as in India.

In the 19th century A.D. the poets of Iran, particularly of Isfahan, started a well-organised movement against this style and for reverting to the classical style of poetic composition. The most prominent poet of Iran of this period was Qaani who reverted to the simple and direct style of the classical poets. At this point of time<sup>44</sup> the western civilization was also making its impact on Iran; and Persian language, particularly prose, was deeply influenced by the western literature as a result of the translations of well-known works of European literature into Persian. The western influence did not trigger off any new movement in Persian poetry, however. The poets of Iran of this period mainly followed the traditions of the old styles, i.e. "Sabak-i-Khurasni" and "Sabak-i-Iraqi".

In this context, it may also be noted that in the last 200 years or so the contacts between Iran and India were very much reduced and the immigration of Persian poets and writers to India was totally stopped. Thus, the cultural and literary relations between the two countries were completely snapped with the result that the Indian poets continued to follow the style and mode of expression of the poets of Safavid period and continued to imitate Faizi, Urfi, Naziri, Saib and Kalim; whereas the poets of Iran totally broke away from the style of Safavid period and 'Sabak-i-Hindi'.

Iqbal was aware<sup>45</sup> of this wide-spread reaction against 'Sabak-i-Hindi' in Iran. His genius lies in the realisation that instead of imitating Sabak-i-Hindi or the style of the contemporary poets of Iran, he adopted the classical style of poetry, particularly of Rumi and Hafiz.

He adopted the poetic conventions of Shiraz as against the poetic traditions of India :

دل از حریم حجاز و نواز شیراز است

My impulses spring from Hedjaz ;  
Whereas my verse-style is derived from Shiraz !

44. Dr. Abdul Shakoor Ahsan.

45. Dr. Salim Akhtar.

Again :

عطا کن شور رومی سوز خسرو عطا کن صدق و اخلاص سنائی  
گہے شعر عراقی را بخوانم گہے جامی زند آتش بجانم

Bless me with vigour of Rumi, inner fire of Khusrau ;  
Bless me with truth and sincerity of Sanai,  
Sometimes I recite verses of Iraqi ;  
Sometimes Jami kindles a fire in my soul !

While he followed in the footsteps of the classical masters, particularly Rumi and Hafiz, he evolved a new style of his own which is simple, easy and elegant. He says :

حسن انداز بیان از من مجو خوانسار و اصفہاں از من مجو

Don't seek beauty of style from me ;  
Don't seek style of Isfahan from me ;

A distinguished Iranian scholar and linguist Dr. Hussain Khateebi, Professor of Tehran University, has expressed the view that Iqbal's style is entirely original and he has not derived anything from the three conventional styles, and he calls it 'Sabak-i-Iqbal'

”اگر خواستہ باشم سبک اشعار علامہ اقبال لاہوری را در چند کلمات  
خلاصہ کنم می گویم این سبکے مخصوص بخود داشت کہ شاید مناسب باشد  
آن را مقام سبک اقبال می خوانم“ (مقدمہ ”رومی عصر“)

In this connection, Dr. Khateebi has also declared Iqbal's language to be a standard and elegant one and wonders as to how this great Indian poet, who had absolutely no contacts with the people of Iran, had such a wonderful mastery over Persian, a foreign language to him, that he could express his deepest mystical, metaphysical and moral thoughts in the most appropriate words.

His first two major works *Asrar-i-Khudi* and *Ramuz-i-Bekhudi* were written in the classical style of Sufi poets of Iran. These contain some infinitely fascinating specimens of his originality of thought, beauty of imagery and simplicity of language. Prof. Nicholson found the melody of Shelley (d. 1882) in some of the fascinating passages of *Asrar-i-Khudi*.

*Experimentation*

It is significant to note that while Iqbal was hide-bound by tradition in his Urdu poetry, he attempted experimentation in the use of verse-forms in his Persian poetry. Some of his poems in *Zabur-i-Ajam* contain fine specimens of his experimentation. A simply enchanting example is the poem entitled "یا چنان کن یا چنیں" :—

یا چنان کن یا چنیں !  
یا برہمن را بفرما نو خداوندے تراش  
یا خود اندر سینہ زناریاں خلوت گزین  
یا چنان کن یا چنیں !

Do either this or that ;  
Either tell the Brahmin  
to fashion a new God,  
Or you take your place in the  
heart of these idol-worshippers,  
Do either this or that !

Another example of his experimentation is the poem in which he exhorts the people of the east to rise against exploitation of the west. It glows with an ineffaceable fervour, verve and vigour :—

اے غنچہ خوابیدہ چو نرگس نگران خیز  
کاشانہ ما رفت بہ تاراج غماں خیز  
از نالہ سرخ چمن از بانگ اذان خیز  
از گرمی ہنگامہ آتش نفساں خیز  
از خواب گران، خواب گران، خواب گران خیز  
از خواب گران خیز !

Arise, Oh, you like a  
Closed bud, open up and  
watch like narcissus ;  
Our hearth and home is gone, arise  
and dispel all these sorrows ;  
Arise as a result of bird's song  
or of call for prayer

Or clarion call of the fire-brand companions,  
 Arise from deep slumber, deep slumber, deep slumber,  
 Arise from deep slumber !

Yet another example of his experimentation is a rousing poem in which he denounces the capitalists, the landlords, the kings and the nobles and the decadent moral and spiritual values and preaches the cult of revolution :—

خواجه از خون رگ مزدور سازد لعل ناب !  
 از جفائے ده خدایاں کشت دهقانان خراب !  
 انقلاب !  
 انقلاب ! اے انقلاب !!

The capitalist converts  
 every drop of blood of a  
 worker into a ruby !  
 Crops of peasants have been damaged  
 through depredations of landlords !  
 Ah, for a revolution, revolution, revolution !

The refrain, 'Inquilab' epitomises the spirit and theme of the poem.

Iqbal has also made experimentation in the matter of rhyme and rhythm, choice of diction and word-constructions.

#### *Use of traditional verse-forms*

In his use of the traditional verse-forms also Iqbal has shown that sureness of touch which is born out of maturity. Masnavi is one of the common genre of Persian poetry. Persian poets have found that Masnavi lends itself well to rendering of metaphysical, mystical and moral themes. Iqbal used this form in his *Asrar-i-Khudi*, *Ramuz-i-Bekhudi*, *Javed Nama*, *Pas Che Bayad Kard* and *Musafir*—all in the metre adopted by Rumi for his celebrated Masnavi. The only departure he made from this metre was in the composition of his *Masnavi Gulshan-i-Raz-i-Jadid*.

#### *Ghazal*

Ghazal is one of the commonest forms of Persian poetry. Yet, Iqbal created a new tradition in Ghazal writing. Notwithstanding his total adherence and observance of the technicalities of classical Ghazal, he

enriched it by his fusion of new ideas and intense emotions. He was the first Persian poet to have widened the scope of Ghazal so as to treat social, political, economic, moral and philosophical matters while preserving, at the same time, its inherent lyricism. What distinguishes Iqbal's Ghazals are their amazing range, scope and variety of subjects. These, it is significant, also represent a total departure from the commonplace subject matter of conventional Persian Ghazals. His Ghazals are marked by richness, unusual sensitivity to language, delicacy in choice of diction, felicity of expression, melody and mellifluousness and ecstatic intensity of realisation of an experience. Even his concept of love is entirely different from the traditional one as I have explained earlier.

فاخته کهن صغیر ناله من شنید و گفت

کس نه سرود در چمن نغمه بار این چنین

The old companion dove heard my wail and said,  
"Nobody in this garden has ever sung a lyric like this!"

عمرها در کعبه و بت خانه می نالد حیات

تا ز بزم عشق یک دانائے راز آید برون

Life wails for ages in the Kaaba and idol-house,  
Till from the assembly of lovers one seer arises.

من بنده آزادم، عشق است امام من

عشق است امام من، عقل است غلام من

I am a free man—my guide is love,  
My guide is love, my slave is reason!

فرقی نه نهاد عاشق در کعبه و بتخانه

این جلوت جانانه، آن خلوت جانانه

The lover doesn't make a distinction between  
Kaaba and Idol-house,  
In the former the Eternal Beauty is patent ;  
While in the latter the Eternal Beauty is latent !

تا تو بیدار شوی ناله کشیدم ورنه  
عشق کاریست که بے آه و فغان تیز کنند<sup>46</sup>

I cried so that I could awaken you ;  
Otherwise love is a business which can well be  
transacted without wailing and crying !

Symbolism is the quintessence of Ghazal. Rumi has alluded to this in the following line :—

خوشتر آن باشد که سر دلبران گفته آید در حدیث دیگران

It would be better if the secrets of love  
are narrated through tales of others !

Iqbal's Ghazals and poems are also consummate examples of symbolism, as he has put it :—

ز شعر دلکش اقبال می توان دریافت  
که درس فلسفه می دار و عاشقی ورزید

One can discover from the beautiful verses of Iqbal that while he enunciated philosophic thoughts, he used the language of love !

Iqbal's favourite symbol is eagle (شاهین) which is redolent of power. Another common symbol in his poetry is the flower لاله (tulip/anemone) which stands for the anguish of the soul. In one of the poems in *Payam-i-Mashriq*, he has summed up the philosophy of Locke, Kant and Bergson in one couplet, each based on the symbol of لاله. Glow-worm (کرمی شب تاب) is another symbol commonly employed by him for the burning passions of man. Endowed<sup>47</sup> with marvellous innovative skill Iqbal has employed allusions to various objects of nature : stars, breeze, flowing brook, waves, etc., all symbolic of his dynamic view of life.

46. It is significant to note that this is the only verse of Iqbal that his equally remarkable contemporary Maulana Abul Kalam Azad has ever quoted in his writings.

47. Abdul Shakoore Ahsan.

Iqbal wrote, in all, 167 Ghazals in Persian in addition to 31 Ghazals which bear all the characteristics of 'Nazm' (نظم) as detailed below :—

|                              |   |     |
|------------------------------|---|-----|
| <i>Zabur-i-Ajam</i>          | : | 119 |
| <i>Payam-i-Mashriq</i>       | : | 45  |
| <i>Javed Nama</i>            | : | 2   |
| <i>Gulshan-i-Raz-i-Jadid</i> | : | 1   |
|                              |   | 167 |

Here one may recall some of the scintillating Ghazals that begin with the following tilting lines :

چند بروئے خود کشی پرده صبح و شام را  
چهره کشا تمام کن جلوۀ ناتمام را  
How long will you cover your face with the veil of night and day,  
Take off the veil and show the effulgence of your beauty !

بیا که بلبل شوریده نغمه پرداز است  
عروس لاله سراپا کرشمه و ناز است  
Come now that the love-lorn nightingale is singing ;  
Tulip like a bride is full of coquetry !

صورت نه پرستم من، بتخانه شکستم من  
آن سیل سبک سیرم، هر بند گسستم من  
I do not worship an idol, I have broken the idol-house ;  
I am like a swelling flood that has breached all barriers !

دل و دیده که دارم همه لذت نظاره  
چه گنه اگر تراشم صنم ز سنگ خاره  
My heart and eye are all given to your beauty ;  
What sin can there be, if I sculpt an idol from stone ?

فرصت کشمکش مده این دل بیقرار را  
یک دو شکن زیاده کن گیسوئے تابدار را  
Let my heart continue to be restless,  
Give a curl or two to your shining tresses !

### Rubai

Iqbal's poetry contains Rubaiyat also. In his collection of *Payam-i-Mashriq* the part entitled "Lala-e-Tur" contains only Rubaiyat, though these are not in the conventional metre but in the metre adopted by Baba Tahir in his 'Do-Beties'.

Again, in his posthumous collection *Armaghan-i-Hedjaz* there are many exquisite Rubaiyat. The distinguishing feature of a Rubai is its expression of the maximum of meaning in the minimum of words. It is considered to be a difficult genre and it is not given to every poet to compose good Rubaiyat. That is why, as compared to other verse-forms, many a great poet has not attempted to compose Rubaiyat. Iqbal was an accomplished artist and skilfully used this verse-form for exposition of his profound thoughts. Dr. Abdul Shakoor Ahsan has observed<sup>48</sup> that in the whole history of Rubaiyat no other poet has attempted to cover such a wide range of subjects as we find in Iqbal's Rubaiyat.

### Do Betie

Iqbal gave a freshness and realism to the traditional verse-form of 'Do Betie' (دوبیتی). This form has become very popular in the modern Persian poetry. *Payam-i-Mashriq* contains many poems composed in this genre. The piece de resistance is the following quatrain :—

شیندم کو کبے بہ کو کبے گفت      کہ در بحریم و پیدا ساحلے نیست  
سفر اندر سرشت ما نہادند      ولے این کاروان را منزلے نیست

I heard one star telling another :

"We are swimming in an ocean without any bounds ;

Movement was implanted in our nature,

Yet, there is no destination for our journey.

### Qata

This is another old verse-form that Iqbal has employed in his own inimitable way. His qatas are models of clarity and brevity. One Qata entitled "Zindgi-o-Amal" (زندگی و عمل) which sums up his philosophy of life, is a tour de force of original thinking :

ساحل افتادہ گفت گرچہ بسے زیستم  
هیچ نہ معلوم شد آہ کہ من چیستم

48. Dr. Abdul Shakoor Ahsan : "Iqbal Ki Farsi Shairi Ka Tanqeedi Jayiza". I must confes here that I have liberally drawn upon this monumental work on the subject.

موجے ز خود رفتہ تیز خرامید و گفت  
ہستم اگر میروم، گر نہ روم نیستم

The shore said, "Although I have lived a lot,  
Nothing has appeared—Ah ! What am I anyway ?"  
The uncontrolled wave swelled quickly and said,  
"I am, if I am moving ; if I am still, I am not."

Iqbal has chosen different verse-forms depending on the subject matter and its appropriate treatment. Revival of some of these conventional and old verse-forms has brought a breath of fresh air in Persian poetry. Notable examples are his employment of 'Mustazad' (مستزاد), 'Musammāt' (مسمط), 'Mukhammas' (مخممس), and 'Musallas' (مسلک). Tarjihband (ترجیح بند) is another old poetical convention which Iqbal used effectively. He has also employed parables, fables and allegories for eloquent exposition of his ideas. He has also used conventional poetical devices such as dialogues (مکالمہ) and debates (مناظرہ) with dramatic effect.

Iqbal has also attempted Tazmin (تضمین) on the lines/verses of numerous known and unknown poets of Persian language and written innumerable Ghazals in the metres of the famous Persian Ghazal-writers. In short, he was a versatile and consummate artist who had masterly command over all forms of poetry.

### *Similes & metaphors*

The beauty of his imagery can be seen in his exquisite similes and metaphors characterised by originality, elegance, freshness and felicity.

Iqbal's craftsmanship is well exemplified in his prodigious wealth of word-constructions of supreme poetic quality. For him the need for word-construction arises not from technical innovation but from the compulsions of thought. In this connection, his letter to Syed Suleman Nadvi dated 23rd March, 1926 is relevant. An extract is given below :—

"Certain of my ideas are the product of the philosophical theories of the present age. Old Persian expressions are of no avail to me to express them. Words are just not available to express adequately certain experiences. That is why one is impelled to resort to new word-constructions. It is no doubt true that these may not be acceptable to those whose mother tongue is Persian, as these may appear to be strange to them."

His poetry is replete with such meaningful, exquisite and novel word-constructions (ترکیب‌ها).

*Iqbal and nature.*

Essentially, Persian poetry mirrors innermost feelings of man. The Persian poet is imprisoned in his own self. He seldom looks around him and describes beauties of nature. Iqbal was greatly influenced by Wordsworth, the poet of nature. Accordingly, beauties of nature are subject-matter of some of his infinitely fascinating poems. One illustration will do. The poem entitled 'Fasl-i-Bahar' (فصل بهار) is unique for its flowing cadence, choice of diction and freshness :—

خیز که در کوه و دشت  
 خیمه زد ابر بهار !  
 مست ترنم هزار  
 طوطی و دراج و سار  
 هر طرف جوئے بار  
 کشت گل و لاله زار  
 چشم تماشا بیار

خیز که در کوه و دشت خیمه زد ابر بهار !

Arise as in mountain and plain  
 Spring-cloud has pitched its tent !  
 Nightingales are singing ;  
 So also parrots and partridges,  
 On each bank of the river  
 There are flower-beds of roses and tulips.  
 Have an observant eye !  
 Arise, as in mountains and plain  
 Spring-cloud has pitched its tent !

In this context his remark in his "Stray Reflections" may be recalled : "God ! I thank Thee for my birth in this world of rosy dawns, flame-clad sunsets and thick forests wherein the gloom of Nature's bygone nights rests in eternal slumber !"<sup>49</sup>

49. \* Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal", edited by Syed Abdul Wahid (p. 91).

At times he is more of a painter than of a poet. One painter, in fact, wanted to paint some of the scenes vividly described in *Javed Nama*. The scenic beauty of Kashmir has been graphically described in some of the most fascinating passages of his poetry.

### *Melody in Iqbal's poetry*

Another characteristic of Iqbal's poetry is its melody in tune with his thoughts and feelings. He had an ear for music. In his youth<sup>50</sup> he was fond of musical concerts. He had a good voice and in his younger days set the fashion of singing Urdu verses in a manner that made a deep impression on his listeners. His Ghazals have a haunting melody of their own. An incomparable mellifluousness pervades his poems also in line with their themes. Even such dry-as-dust subjects as detachment and ego are treated in Ghazals and poems of bewitching cadence. In Iqbal's poetry there is a rare synthesis of meaning and melody. Profundity of thought and intensity of feeling combined with melody of words invests his poetry with magical effect and incredible beauty. Some of his poems are unparalleled in Persian poetry for their haunting melody. Instances can be multiplied but I would confine myself only to quoting from one of them. The poem characterised by fascinating rhythmic beauty and all-pervading melody is "Hudi", a rich evocation to enchantment :

ناقصہٗ سیار من  
 آھوئے تاتار من  
 درھم و دینار من  
 اندک و بسیار من  
 دولت بیدار من

تیز ترک گام زن منزل ما دور نیست !

My moving dromedary !  
 She is like gazelle for me ;  
 She is all my wealth ;  
 She is all my worth.  
 Move a little further, my dromedary,  
 for our destination is not far !

He thus produces in words effects analogous to music.

50. "Malfoozat-i. qbal" compiled by Mahmud Nizami.

### RECOGNITION OF IQBAL IN IRAN

It is noteworthy that while Iqbal wrote copiously on the contemporary situation in Afghanistan, Turkey and the Arab lands, he did not write much about Iran<sup>51</sup>. At that time Iran was one of the most backward and exploited countries with two rival powers Russia and Britain vying with each other in their nefarious designs. The most prominent crusader against these powers was Syed Jamaluddin Asadabadi (also known as Afghani). He was the only contemporary intellectual of Iran who greatly influenced Iqbal. With assumption of power by Reza Shah Pahlavi in 1925 Iqbal was hopeful about the future of Iran. He says in *Javed Nama* :—

پہلوی آن وارث تخت قباد ناخن او عقدہ ایران کشاد

Pahlavi, inheritor of the throne of Qabad,

resolved the problem of Iran by his adroitness.

Unfortunately, like Kemal Ataturk of Turkey, Reza Shah was also obsessed with the ambition of transforming Iran into a modern society. Besides, he also revived chauvinistic feelings of pride in the Aryan race to which the Iranians are said to belong. His endeavours for westernization and inculcation of a spirit of racial superiority set at naught what he had sought to achieve through his coup. This turn of events deeply depressed Iqbal who suspected that after emancipation Iran had fallen a prey to the machinations of the British :—

بعد مدت چشم خود بر خود کشاد لیکن اندر حلقمہ دامی نہاد

کشتہ ناز بتان شوخ و سنگ خالق تہذیب و تقلید فرنگ

کار آن وارفتہ ملک و نسب ذکر شایور است و تحقیر عرب

روزگار او تہی از واردات از قہور کہنہ می جوید حیات

(*Javed Nama*)

After a long time, Iran opened its eyes from slumber,

But soon it fell prey to the wiles (of west) ;

Iran taken in the vivacious beauties

And new civilisation, started imitating the west ;

It lost itself in questions of country, race, ancestors  
and in denunciation of Arabs ;

The result is that nothing of consequence has happened in Iran,  
For it tries to seek life from the dead icons.

51. Prof. Nurul Hasan Ansari, "Iqbal Aur Muasreen-e-Iran" in the book *Iqbal ka Shaor-O-Fan* compiled by Dr. Qamar Rais (Pp. 53-63).

Iqbal had, however, unbounded love for and faith in the younger generation of Iran as is evident from this Ghazal in *Zabur-e-Ajam* :—

چون چراغ لاله سوزم در خیابان شما !  
اے جوانان عجم ! جان من و جان شما !

Like the flame of tulip I have burnt myself in your garden,  
(For) you, the youth of Iran, my very soul, my very life !

His prediction that revival of Islam alone would turn a new leaf in the history of Iran came true with the Islamic revolution of Ayatullah Khomeini.

It is a great pity indeed that during his life time Iqbal was not known in Iran. He was not invited to the Thousandth Birth Anniversary celebrations of Firdausi in 1934.<sup>52</sup> On his death a weekly of Teheran published one Qata of Iqbal and that too reproduced from the magazine 'Kabul'. Even after his death when a good-will mission visited India in 1943 consisting of the then Minister of Education Professor Ali Asghar Hikmat and two professors of University of Teheran—Prof. Rashid Yasmi and Prof. Pure Daud —they did not say much about Iqbal. In fact, Prof. Pure Daud who had spent some years in Bombay and in Shanti Niketan and should have known better, said in a press conference : "Iqbal was a local poet and no one knows about him in Iran. "اقبال یی شاعر معلی بوده است" در ایران اورا کسی نمی شناسد". This observation provoked adverse criticism in the newspapers and journals at that time. The Iranian delegation soon realising the faux pas tried to make amends by laying a wreath on Iqbal's tomb in Lahore. The reasons for this studied neglect of Iqbal in Iran are not far to seek. I may be pardoned, if I say that linguistic chauvinism in Iran has precluded proper appreciation of the merits of the earlier Indian poets of Persian too. In their arrogance the Iranians did not recognise even such distinguished Persian poets of India who had preceded Iqbal, as Bedil and Ghalib. Bedil is now, of course, popular in Afghanistan. The Iranians only accepted and acclaimed Amir Khusrau as a great Persian poet of India. The other reason is that there was no tradition of literary criticism in Iran. As Browne observes : "The Persians themselves are not addicted to literary criticism ; perhaps because just

52. In his article Syed Mohammed Mohit Tabatabai has mentioned two different years of the celebrations—at one place he mentions the year 1934, while at another place he indicates April, 1932. For reference please see his article 'علامہ اقبال' translated by Dr. Mohammed Riaz and published in the journal "Funoon" of Lahore (Commemorative Volume, 1977). Source : Dr. Salim Akhtar's book *Iqbal Aur Hamare Fikri Ravayye* (p. 166).

as people only discuss their health when they are beginning to lose it, those only indulge in meticulous literary criticism who are no longer able or have never been able to produce good literature." Moreover, in the last 200 years or so Persian language has undergone a sea-change in its idioms and phrases partly as a result of the movement for purification of the language by deliberate elimination of Arabic words in protest against the cultural domination of the Arabs and partly because of the growing influence of the Western literature, particularly French. It is no doubt true that there has been a qualitative change in Persian language of today as compared to the language used, say, about 1,000 years ago by Firdausi; yet it is not as distinct as in English spoken today when compared to English of Shakespeare. Consequently, the Persian language as spoken in Iran has become entirely different from the one taught in India. However, it may be borne in mind that even in Iran differences exist between the words and idioms as used in different regions. Even in the period of Ghaznavids and Saljuqis the prose and the poetry of Qum and Herat were different from that of Isfahan and Tus as pointed out by Prof. Mujtaba Meenavi. As mentioned earlier Iqbal's style was evolved on the pattern of classical poets of Iran and is entirely different from the style of modern poets such as Bahar, Ashraf, Arif, Dihkhuda, Iraj, Sarmad, Nima Youshej, etc. Consequently, his language and style may appear to be alien to the natives of Iran. Dr. Lutf Ali Suratgar has put it most appropriately as under :—

"These phrases and words are a part of a great whole and have come into circulation along with the new phrases and constructions now prevalent in modern Iran and one does not feel any sense of strangeness about them. These can be compared to a situation where old members of a family come back after a long time to meet their young relatives and relate to the young children stories of the bygone ages.<sup>53</sup>"

Following major scholars and critics of Iran have written about Iqbal :—

#### *Dayi-ul-Islam*

The first Iranian writer who introduced Iqbal in Iran was Syed Mohammad Ali Dayi-ul-Islam who was Head of the Department of Persian in Usmania University, Hyderabad. He wrote an article on "Iqbal and Persian Poetry" in an effort to introduce him to the Iranian scholars and poets and sent it to Teheran for publication.

53. *Iqbal Iranion Ki Nazar Mein*, by Dr. Abdul Hamid Irfani (P. 227).

*Syed Muhit Tabatabai*

Another famous writer of Iran Syed Muhit Tabatabai, who accidentally came across some of Iqbal's works in 1926, was greatly impressed by them and wrote an article on his poetry.

*Prof. Sayeed Nafeesi*

Another distinguished intellectual of Iran was Prof. Sayeed Nafeesi who wrote some letters to Iqbal when he read his work *Zabur-e-Ajam* in 1932. Iqbal wrote two letters to him in Persian—one on 26th August, 1932 and another on 4th November, 1932. These letters assume special historical and literary significance because no other specimen of his Persian prose exists except these two letters. It is evident from them that it was an ardent desire of the intellectuals of Iran that Iqbal should visit their country and he himself was also keen to go there. After Iqbal's death Nafeesi wrote a comprehensive article on his life, philosophy and poetry in the journal *Armaghan*. Again in April, 1945 Nafeesi brought out a commemorative Volume of his journal *Muhit* on Iqbal.

During the Second Great World War in pursuance of the efforts made to strengthen the cultural bonds between British India and Iran an Association styled as Anjuman Rawabit-e-Adabi Iran O Hind "انجمن روابط ادبی ایران و هند" was set up in 1943. It was in the meeting of this Association that the poet-laureate of Iran, Bahar recited his famous poem containing the well-known couplet describing the present age as 'the age of Iqbal':

عصر حاضر خاصہ اقبال گشت      واحدے کز صد ہزاران برگزشت

The modern age specially became the age of Iqbal,  
He alone stole march over thousands of others.

*Prof. Mujtaba Meenavi*

In 1949 the first book on Iqbal entitled *Iqbal Lahori* was written by Prof. Mujtaba Meenavi, an eminent Professor of Teheran University and a noted writer. He paid a glowing tribute to Iqbal when he said "When we consider different aspects of Iqbal's life, we come to the conclusion that in the last 100 years certainly Iran did not produce any eminent personality who could in all respects be compared to Iqbal and it is possible that even the other countries of the East may not fare better than Iran."

*Iqbal Nama*

In 1951 the literary journal *Danish* of Teheran published a book entitled *Iqbal Nama* containing articles and poems read on the birth anniversary of the poet in 1950 and 1951. Tributes were paid to the poet by several contemporary eminent poets of Iran such as Sadiq Sarmad, who was called the national poet of Iran, Lutf Ali Suratgar, Amiri Firoz Kohi, etc. Papers were read out by eminent scholars such as Hasan Taqizade, Ali Akbar Dekhuda and Sayeed Nafeesi.

*Dr. Lutf Ali Suratgar*

Dr. Lutf Ali Suratgar, Chancellor of Shiraz University, wrote a learned article comparing Iqbal with Hafiz.

*Ali Akbar Dekhuda*

The renowned scholar and poet Ali Akbar Dekhuda wrote a moving poem on Iqbal, one verse of which is quoted below :—

درعائے تمین خود درج دری ریزد  
از پهنه این میدان جولانگه خود سازد

He casts pearls in Dari language ;  
He has created his own place in this vast expanse  
(of Dari language and literature).

*Dr. Khwaja Abdul Hameed Irfani*

Dr. Khwaja Abdul Hameed Irfani wrote a book *Rumi-e-Asr* with a foreword by Prof. Sayeed Nafeesi, which was published in Teheran in 1953. This was the second book on Iqbal.

*Syed Ghulam Raza Sayeedi*

A major work on Iqbal was *اقبال شناسی — هنر و اندیشه محمد اقبال* by Syed Ghulam Raza Sayeedi, a well-known writer of Iran. In the preface he says, "If the Anglo-Saxon nation take pride in Shakespeare, France in Victor Hugo and Germany in Goethe, the Muslim world in general and Iran and Pakistan in particular can be legitimately proud of Iqbal."

*Ahmad Sarosh*

In 1964 Ahmed Sarosh published "Collected Works of Iqbal" with a detailed preface and annotations. This was the first comprehensive collection of Iqbal's works published in Iran.

*Dr. Ahmad Ahmadi Berjandi*

In 1970 Dr. Ahmad Ahmadi Berjandi compiled his famous book *Dana-e-Raz*, the third critical work on Iqbal.

*Fakhruddin Hedjazi*

Another important book *Sarod-e-Iqbal* was brought out by Fakhruddin Hedjazi in 1975. This contains selection from his works.

*Mohammed Ali Islami Nidoshan*

Another major selection from Iqbal's works has been brought out under the title of "دیدن دگر آموز و شنیدن دگر آموز" by Mohammed Ali Islami Nidoshan.

*Dr. Ali Shariati*

In the wake of Islamic resurgence in Iran, some of the great revolutionaries and scholars have been influenced by the philosophy of Iqbal. Foremost amongst them is Dr. Ali Shariati. He played a crucial role in the movement against the Shah of Iran and gave his life for this cause. He delivered two important lectures on Iqbal after the revolution in Iran. One was entitled "اقبال و ما" and the other "معاصم قرن آخر". The second lecture has been translated by Dr. Kabir Ahmad Jaisi in Urdu and published by the Iqbal Institute of Kashmir University, Srinagar, in 1981. Shariati calls Iqbal 'Ghizali of this age.'

*Ghulam Ali Haddad Adil*

A selection from the poetry of Iqbal which has been included in the text books by the Islamic Republic of Iran, is entitled "اقبال لاهوری" compiled by Ghulam Ali Haddad Adil with the portrait of the poet with his following verses :—

اے بسا شاعر کہ بعد از برگ او چشم خود پر بست و چشم ما کشاد

Again, a revolutionary poet of Iran, Mohammad Yagana Aaram, dedicated his collection of verses *Darogh-e-Buzurg* (دروغ بزرگ) to Iqbal while distributing it in cyclostyled form in London.<sup>54</sup>

Iqbal's popularity is no longer confined to the elite in Iran. Books on his life and poetry and philosophy have been appearing regularly in Iran. Selections from his works are being published in magazines and weeklies. The religious organisations on the one hand and the progre-

54. *Allama Iqbal Aur Hamare Fikri Ravayye* by Dr. Salim Akhtar (p. 168).

ssive writers on the other, are all deeply influenced by him. It will be of interest to note that the Iranians are using some of the word-constructions of Iqbal<sup>56</sup>. Poets and critics quote his verses in their poems and learned papers. The famous progressive poetess of Iran, Seemeen Bahbahani quoted the following line of Iqbal in her collection 'Jay-Pa'<sup>56</sup> (جائے پا) :—

ع - خیمہ ہا از ہم جدا دلہا یکہست

Although we are separated by tents ;  
Yet we are united by hearts.

Many distinguished scholars and intellectuals of Iran have studied Iqbal's works and paid tributes to him as a great poet. In the preface of his collection of Iqbal's poetry "کلیات اقبال" Dawood Shirazi says :—

"اقبال سبک و مکتب جدیدی در شعر فارسی تاسیس کرده کہ حقاً باید سبک او را سبک اقبال نامید و قرن ادبی حاضر را باید بنام او مزین ساخت"

Iqbal evolved a new style and founded a new school of poetry in Persian that may undoubtedly be called 'Sabak-i-Iqbal' and the modern age of Persian literature should be named after him.<sup>57</sup>

This is the greatest tribute that an Iranian could pay to the poet.

Another admirer of Iqbal, Ahmed Ali Rajai's view in regard to Iqbal's language and style are worth quoting<sup>58</sup> :—

"I would say without fear of contradiction that the unique appeal of Iqbal is his simplicity of language in which he could deal with complex and abstruse subjects of philosophy in the most arresting manner. His simple language is akin to the style of his intellectual mentor, Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi and, to some extent, Khwaja Shirazi. Rumi and Hafiz elucidated sublime mystical and metaphysical concepts in the context of the teachings of the Quran and Hadith ; whereas Iqbal expressed philosophical and political ideas in addition to these subjects in his simple, lucid and limpid verses."

An eminent Iranian philosopher Dr. Syed Hussain Nasr<sup>59</sup> has expressed the view that no other Muslim thinker or reformer of the

55. *Iqbaliat*, Volume II, journal of Iqbal Institute, Srinagar (p. 125).

56. *Allama Iqbal Aur Hamare Fikri Ravayye*.

57. Dr. Salim Akhtar.

58. *Iqbal Iranion Ki Nazar Mein* by Dr. Abdul Hamid Irfani.

59. *Ibid*.

modern age except Iqbal has contributed so much towards the reconstruction and resurgence of Islamic thought.

In this connection Prof. Sayeed Nafisi's opinion is also significant<sup>60</sup> :—

“A great poet is one who can change the spirit of the age, conquer time and bring about a revolution in thought and thus usher in a new period in the history of the world. I make bold to say that in the last few thousand years of the human history such a role has been played by a few individuals. In Greece this role was played by Plato and in the world of Islam by Ibn Sina (Avicenna) and Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi. It found its culmination in Mohammad Iqbal.”

Finally, there could be no better assessment of Iqbal's place in Persian poetry than what Dr. Ahmed Ali Rajai has observed : “In my view Iqbal is like a newly-discovered continent whose many fascinating and notable features are yet to be fully explored.”<sup>61</sup>

### Conclusion

In conclusion I would say that during the period of about 1,000 years of its growth in India, Persian language has produced two great poets—first was Amir Khusrau and the last was Mohammed Iqbal. Iqbal enriched the Indo-Persian poetry with new ideas, a coherent system of thought, a buoyant philosophy of life and a unique synthesis of the best in the poetry and philosophy of the east and the west. He gave a new direction and a new dimension to Persian poetry and widened its scope so as to cover almost all fields of modern knowledge including science and philosophy of the east and the west. So far Persian poetry contained exposition of mystical and metaphysical ideas only (عارفانه و حکیمانه). With his profound erudition and remarkable perception Iqbal focussed on all the important problems of the age—social, economic, moral, philosophical, political as also on eternal verities. And to use Keat's picturesque phrase, he loaded every rift of the subject with ore. He infused into modern Persian poetry a new spirit, a fresh vitality (elan vital) and a new awareness of the contemporary scene. Viewed in this context, Iqbal made a substantial,

60. *Iqbal Iranion Ki Nazar Mein.*

61. Other books on Iqbal in Persian as listed in 'Kitabiat-e-Iqbal' by Rafiduddin Hashmi (1977) include (1) *Iqbal-o-Iran* by Dr. Abdul Hamid Irfani, (2) *Mohammed Iqbal* by Fazlullah Raza, (3) *Iqbal Dar Rahe Maulvi* by Dr. Syed Mohd. Akram, (4) *Iqbal Mufakkir-O-Shair* and (5) *Fikr-e-Iqbal* by Syed Mohd. Muqtadari.

significant and lasting contribution not only to the Indo-Persian literature but also to the Persian literature as a whole. Indeed, his poetry transcends narrow geographical limits ; it is universal, it is immortal.

But I shall not be honest to myself nor shall I be fair to Iqbal, if I do not share my personal gloomy view of the future of the study of Iqbal's Persian poetry in this sub-continent. When Iqbal chose to write in Persian, it was widely taught in schools and colleges. But after 50 years of his death teaching of Persian is not as common as it was during his life time. Just as no one reads the Persian poetry of Ghalib today, I fear that nobody would read the Persian poetry of Iqbal after another 50 years. Who reads today Milton's writing in Latin ? I think that study of Iqbal's Persian poetry will only be confined to a select band of scholars, students and research workers in the years to come. He was a stranger in Iran and, unfortunately, he is likely to become a stranger in his own land so far as his works in Persian are concerned. It is a great pity indeed that a poet should have written nearly two thirds of his poetry in a foreign language and the greater part of it is his best poetry. A good book is the precious life-blood of a master's spirit, said Milton. For Iqbal it was the product of his "heart's blood" (خونِ جگر). Yet the disconcerting trend indicates that his great poetical compositions on such thought-provoking and earth-shaking concepts as self (خودی), love (عشق), perfect man (انسان کامل) and the supremacy of man in the scheme of things (عظمت آدم) would be almost lost on the coming generations in this sub-continent. However, it is a matter of some solace that Iqbal's poetry will perhaps have a brighter future in Afghanistan and Iran—not because of his poetry but because of his philosophy ; not because of the medium but because of the message. As mentioned earlier, after the Islamic revolution in Iran, Iqbal has occupied a place of pride as the poet-philosopher who was its precursor. Significantly the following couplet of Iqbal has gained wide currency and is commonly quoted in Iran today ;—

می رسد مردے کہ زنجیر غلامان بشکند  
دیده‌ام از روزن دیوار زندان شما

There comes a man who breaks the shackles of the slaves ;  
This I have seen through a chink in the walls of your  
prison-house !

I am sorry that I should end this lecture on this dismal note.

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